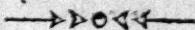


04018.2.19

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL
CATECHISM,

OR, A
COLLECTION OF OBSERVATIONS

FIT TO DEFEND
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION
AGAINST
ITS ENEMIES.



WRITTEN IN FRENCH

BY F. X. DE FELLER,

Author of the Biographical Dictionary, the Luxembourg Journal, and several other learned works.

TRANSLATED

BY THE REV. J. P. MULCAILE,

FROM THE THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND CONSIDERABLY
AUGMENTED BY THE AUTHOR.

VOL. I.

*Philosophy consists in knowing the truth, or that which really is ;
and that undoubtedly is God.*

S. Cyril of Alex. B. v. against Julian.



Dublin :

PRINTED BY H. FITZPATRICK, NO. 4, CAPEL-STREET.

1800.

And sold by KEATING and Co. No. 37, Duke-Street,
Grosvenor-Square, London.



CATALOGUE

OF OBSERVATIONS

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

ITS EXAMINER



BY THE REV. J. C. H. ...

FROM THE FIRST EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED
AND ENLARGED BY THE AUTHOR

VOL. I

Printed by ... in London ...
and ...
of ...

PRINTED BY ...

And sold by ... and Co. No. 27, Dile Street,
Croydon-Square, London.

PREFACE.

HOWEVER misapplied the word *PHILOSOPHY* has been, there is one sense, and, properly speaking, but one, in which this denomination supposes the light and dignity of Reason; and this is the sense in which we give the title of Philosophical to the simplest of all things, and the least thought of by Philosophers, I mean the Christian Catechism. We leave it still in possession of teaching by Question and Answer: but we require of it now to account with us minutely for what we were formerly satisfied to take from it upon trust. If, in some places, it appears rather plain and familiar, let it be remembered it is a Catechism: if, in others, it makes some show of erudition, let it not be forgot, it is a Philosophical Catechism.

It is the spirit of the Gospel Doctrine, to proportion itself to all sorts of minds and capacities, and to diffuse its light according to the disposition of those who come to look for it. The learned, says St. Pau', are called to it, as well as the ignorant: The vulgar will not read this work: but it may be read with benefit by those, who, in religious matters, wish to believe in a manner more rational than the vulgar.

We

PREFACE.

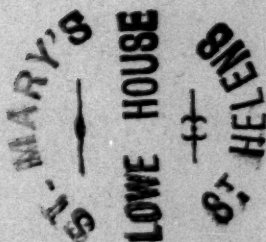
We have not scrupled making use of some Dissertations we formerly published upon different subjects : these we claim as our own. We have likewise made use of several Discourses, which, in the course of our ministry, we had occasion to compose in defence of the doctrines of Christianity. It will be also perceived, that we have borrowed assistance from the Apologies, both ancient and modern, that have been made for the Christian Religion : this we have done particularly when we found it difficult to confute error in a more pointed and forcible manner. We preferred the merit of being always useful to that of being always original : but, in availing ourselves of the labour of others, we have not spared our own. The subject, though seemingly worn out, may still afford some new ideas, and some Answers to Objections that escaped the notice of former writers on the side of religion : as it happens sometimes, upon the defeat of a great army, that individuals, unperceived in the crowd by the victor, get off with their lives.

INDEX.

INDEX

OF THE

CHAPTERS AND ARTICLES.



The Figures denote the Numbers, not the Pages.

BOOK THE FIRST.

On the Existence of God.

CHAPTER I.—IS Atheism upon principle a thing possible	Num.	1.
———— II.—System of the Atheist		24
ARTICLE I.—Credulity of the Atheist		25
———— II.—Matter Eternal		26
———— III.—Eternity of Motion		30
———— IV.—The Atoms		35
———— V.—Fruitfulness of Matter		42
———— VI.—Attraction		63
———— VII.—Eternity of the World		66
———— VIII.—Final Causes		71
CHAPTER III.—Agreement of all mankind in the profession of a God. Questions on certain Attributes of God. A Digression on the Existence of Evil. Optimism		88
———— IV.—Misery of the Atheist		115
———— V.—Atheism Considered relative to Society.		124
	BOOK	

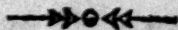
INDEX.

BOOK THE SECOND:

The Soul of Man.

	<i>Num.</i>
CHAPTER I.—IS the Soul Spiritual	137
A Digression on the Soul of Brutes.	168
II.—Immortality of the Soul	183
III.—Man's Free Will.	196

SUBSCRIBERS.



Rev. Doctor Aberne, Professor of Theology,
Maynooth-College
William Anderson, D.D.
Nicholas Arnold, Harbourstown
Gerald Aylmer, Esq.
Mr. M. Ayre.
Most Rev. Doctor Bray
Rev. Thomas Betagh, D. D.
Pat. Brenan
Mr. Blake
Richard Benson, P. P. Finglas
John Burke, Castlebar
Nicholas Boylan
Mr. Brady, Roebuck
Andrew Bradley
Val. Bodkin, D. D. L. L. D.
Thomas Brady, Diocese Ardagh
Edward Byrne, Esq.
Thomas Braughall, Esq.
Samuel Bradshaw, Esq.
W. J. Brittain, Esq.
William Bayly, Esq. Youghall
Ignatius Begg, Esq. Mount Dalton
Mr. James Byrne
James Charles Bacon
Patt Byrne, Student Maynooth College
B. Bolger
Peter Begley, Ross
John Busted, Bookseller, Tralee, 3 copies
Mrs. E. Byrne, Priorefs, Brunswick-street Convent
Catharine Brady, Fairview, Annesly Bridge

SUBSCRIBERS.

The Honorable Serjeant Chatterton
Right Rev. Doctor Cruise, 12 copies
Right Rev. Doctor Caulfield, 12 copies
Abbé Cablé
Rev. P. Coleman
Daniel Costigan
Richard Callaghan
J. Corrin, Wexford, 6 copies
B. Collan, Carrickmacross
Mr. Callan, Drogheda
Thomas Coen, Maynooth College
John Conroy, Red Cross
P. Corcoran, Church-street
Michael Coyne, Rector of Corpo Santo,
Lisbon
Edward Conlan, Esq.
William Cuthbert, Esq.
Charles Coslet, Esq.
Robert Caddell, Esq.
Captain John Connor, Wexford
Mr. Thomas Cheevers
Patt Carroll
Bernard Coile
William Cole
Philip Conolly
Joseph Cahill
Richard Cooke, Borissleigh
John Cronin, Bookseller, Cork
Richard Cullen
Michael Courtney, Sall's Court
Thomas Conroy
William Clinch
John Coleman
Michael Clarke
Michael Cashell.
Mrs. Frances Caffray, Hammond lane.
Most Rev. Doctor Dillon, 12 copies
Right Rev. Doctor Delany, 12 copies

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. Doctor Delort, Prof. Philos. Col. Maynooth
Doctor Darré, Prof. Logick, Ditto
M. Daly, Rector of S. Patrick's Col. Lisbon
M. D'Arcy
Thomas Dalton
P. Dunne, Naas
J. Dowling, Geashell
John Dunn, Lucan
Michael Devoy
Patt Doyle
Mr. Drake, Athboy
John Dimonde
Philip Dougherty
Francis Duffy
James Dixon, Esq.
Thomas Dillon, Esq.
Thomas Donohoe, Esq.
Jeremiah Dwyer, Esq.
Mr. John Dillon,
Michael Dwyer
Richard Donoghoe
Walter Doolin
Bernard Duffy, Dundalk
P. Dowling, Merchant
James Draper, Crampton-court
John Devereux
John Doyle
Michael Devoy, Kill
Mrs. Frances Doyle
Dublin Library Society.
Rev. Mr. Egan, Tralee
Denis Egan, D. D.
William Edgar, Esq.
Mr. Christopher Elliot.

Earl Fingall
Right Rev. Doctor French

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. Doctor Flood, Prefident, R.C. Col. Maynooth

Richard Fitzgerald

Mr. Finny, Ashe-street

William Flood, Sandyford

John Fay, P. P. of Kilberry

William Fitzgerald, College, Carlow

Anthony Foy

James Flynn, Drogheda

Timothy Flynn, Ditto.

Mr. Flood, Kilskeer

John Fogarty, Cashell

A. Fitzgerald

James Fitzsimons, Esq Castlewood, King's Co.

Thomas Fitzgerald, Esq. Geraldine

Mr. Nicholas Fitzpatrick, Kilkenny

Emanuel Fitzpatrick

P. Fitzpatrick

W. Folds

Michael Foren, Carlow

Andrew Fraley

John Ferrall.

Lord Viscount Gormanstown

Rev. J. Gibbons, O. S. P.

Dennis Gahan, O. S. A.

Mr. Gilmer

Mr. Grace

Richard Goffon, Meath

Anthony Gofs, Leighlin-bridge

John M. Grainger, Esq.

Patt Grehan, Esq.

Thomas Richard Geraghty, Esq.

Joseph Geraghty, Esq. Usher's-quay

Mr. John Greene

Patt Gibbons

John Gillespie, Derry

Thomas Glynn.

Andrew Dunn, D. D.

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. S. Hanratty
 William Harford, Drogheda
 Patrick Hogan, Limerick
 Patrick Halfpenny, Ballingarry
 Christopher Halligan
 Patrick Hanly, Diocesis Elphin
 Mr. Harty, Nenagh
 Patrick Higgins
 J. B. Hamilton, Balruddery
 David Hinchy, Esq.
 James Halpen, Esq.
 Captain William Hamilton, Ash-brook
 Mr. John Hart
 Matt. Hart
 Charles Henecy
 Edward Hay
 James Hughes
 Mrs. Hart.
 Henry Joyce, Esq. Westport.
 Earl Kenmare
 Rev. Mal. Kelly
 James Keelan, Drogheda
 Thomas Kennedy
 Patrick Kelly, Mary's-lane
 Oliver Kelly
 William Killen, Navan
 Michael Keating, Clonfert
 Thomas Kavanagh
 M. P. Kinfela
 Peter Kearney
 Michael Kearney
 Joseph Kelly, Esq. Dorset-street
 Mr. Francis Kindelan
 Felix Kearney
 Andrew Kirwan, Galway
 John Kiernan, Collon
 Richard Kelly
 Mrs. Margaret Kiernan

Right

SUBSCRIBERS.

Right Rev. Doctor Lanigan
Right Rev. Doctor Lennan
Rev. Doctor Lynah, Westport
Charles Lovelock, Professor Belles Lettres,
Maynooth-College
Mr. Lubé
William Ledwich
Mr. Le Tellier,
Patt Lawler, Benakerry
Robert Laffan, Cashell
Francis Lynch, O. P.
Patrick Lambert, D. D. Wexford
Robert Lynch, Esq. Limerick
Messrs. Lynch and Young
Pat and James Lynch, Galway
Peter Laughrin
Patrick Lennan, Armagh
Michael Lowry
Mrs. Eliza T. Lee
Margaret Landy.

Right Rev. Doctor Moylan, 26 copies
Right Rev. Doctor M'Mullan, 6 copies
Rev. B. Mac Mahon
D. Murray
M. M'Farlan
B. Murphy
M. Miley
A. M'Ardle, Newry
A. M'Hugh, Strabane
James Mongon, Lifford
B. Mullen, St. Patrick's College, Lisbon
J. Murphy, Cork
Nicholas Molloy, S. T. B.
Michael Montague
Michael Moran, O. S. F.
Patrick Magrath, Patrick's-well
Mr. Magrath, Kilkenny
Patrick M'Nicholas, Aconry
Michael Maguire, James's-street

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. John M'Kenna, Carrick-on-Suir
William M'Kenna, R. C. A. & P. P. Nobbor
Edward Magennis
Mr. M'Ardell, Armagh
Mr. Murphy, Nenagh
James M'Cormick
Mr. Meagher
John Maher, Wicklow
John M'Donnell, Maynooth-College
Eugene Mulhallond
Bernard Murphy, Maynooth-Col.
Mr. Moran, Castle-town, Delvin
Mr. Murray, Clonmellan
Mr. M'Dermott, Carlintown
Mr. M'Mahon, Moyratty
George Mohun, Ballibay
Alexander M'Donnell
Patrick M'Kenna
Matthias M'Cosker, V. G. of Derry
James Murphy
John M'Laughlin
James M'Feely
John M'Ginn
Charles M'Bride
Robert M'Shane
Michael M'Gaulrick
Peter M'Laughlin, Tit. Dean of Derry
A. Martin, P. P. Collon
Randall MacDonnel, Esq.
Nicholas Mahon, Esq.
Francis Mahony, Esq. Limerick
James Moore, Esq.
Michael Murphy, Esq.
Edmond Moore, Esq. Annabeg, Co. Galway
C. Mulvany, Esq.
Captain Mulhall
Mr. P. Magenis, Charles-street
James Magenis, Cuffe-street

Mr.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Mr. Joseph Magenis, Miltown Mills
Francis M'Ardle
John Mackin
John M'Gauran, Garretstown, Philomath
C. M'Donnell
John M'Namara
William M'Mullan
Bryan Murphy
Daniel Murphy, Waterford
Patrick Mackin

Mrs. Teresa M'Cormick
Miss Mary Anne M'Ardle
Miss Anne Meade, Brunswick-street Convent.

Mr. John Neary.
Tim. Nowlan, Carlow
Garrett Nugent, Book-binder.

Most Rev. Doctor O'Reilly
Right Rev. Doctor O'Donnell, 25 copies
Right Rev. Doctor O'Connor
Rev. Mr. O'Reilly, Clarendon-street
P. O'Shea, Limerick
Ambrose O'Connor
William O'Flynn
John O'Flynn
J. O'Flynn, D. D. Tit. Dean Limerick
Bryan O'Donnell, Limerick
James O'Reagan, Limerick
A. O'Ryan, Do.
Thomas O'Neil, Abbey-feal
Cor. O'Sullivan, Aughadown
Francis O'Hearn
Morgan O'Meara
Mr. O'Reilly, Kells
Mr. O'Reilly, Old-Castle
B. O'Quin, Clonfeacle, Tit. Dean of Armagh
Gordon O'Neill, Cashell

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. Laurence O'Regan
Eugene O'Callaghan
John O'Regan
Charles O'Sheil
Daniel O'Flaherty
Bernard O'Neil
John O'Brien, O. S. F.
D. Thos. O'Brien, Esq.
Val. O'Connor, Esq. 2 copies
Edmund O'Regan, Esq. Limerick
Henry O'Shea, Esq. Limerick
Tyrell O'Reilly, Esq.
John O'Neil, Esq.
Anthony O'Brien, Esq.
Mr. John O'Reardon, Killarney
Michael O'Brien
Myles O'Reilly
Mrs. O'Mara.

Right Rev. Doctor Plunket
Honorable Robert Plunket
Rev. F. Power, V. Pref. R. C. Col. Maynooth
Patrick Pettit, Wexford
Michael Prendergast, Dunleckny
Daniel Phillips
P. O. Plunket, Esq.
John Plunkett, Esq.
Francis T. Power, Esq.
Mr. Patt Pendergast
Michael Power, Boyle
Abraham Parry
Peter Plunkett.

Rev. James Quin
Mr. Terence Quin, Ardboe
Wm. Ruffel
Mr. William Quirk
James Quinlan.

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS

Rev. Andrew Ryan, Limerick

L. Reynolds

Andrew Rorke Esq.

Surgeon Rooney

Mr. John Rogers

Thomas Rorke, Maynooth College

Thomas Ryan

Thomas Read

Michael Ryan

Thomas Rorke.

Lord Viscount Southwell

Right Rev. Doctor Sughrue, 20 copies

Rev. Doctor M. Stone, President, Stonyhurst College, 6 copies

Wm. Stafford

Richard Sheridan

Henry Staunton, D. D. Carlow

John Synnot, Gorey

Walter Sweetman, Esq.

Mich. Sweetman, Esq.

Thomas Savage, Esq.

M. Stapleton, Esq.

P. Smith, Esq. Snugbro, County Meath

Mr. John Segrave, Maynooth College

Patt. Sitred, Ennis

Philip Sillwood

M. Scanlan

Mrs. Savage

C. Smyth.

Most Rev. Doctor Troy, 12 copies

Rev. Mr. Taylor

Nicholas Thompson

John Toomy

Patt Thunder, Esq.

William Talbot, Esq. Castle-Talbot

Doctor Toole

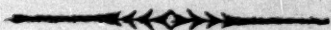
Mr. James Tyrrell.

Rev.

SUBSCRIBERS.

Rev. Nicholas Wade
Laurence James Weyburn, O. S. F.
James Ward, Cratloe
Mr. James Walsh, Junior
Patrick Walsh
Andrew Walsh

Right Rev. Doctor Young, Limerick.



*The following respectable names of ENGLISH
SUBSCRIBERS were received too late for Insertion
in their proper order.*

Right Rev. Doctor Douglass, Bishop of Centuriæ,
V. A.

Right Rev. Doctor Gibson, Bishop of Acanthos,
V. A.

Right Rev. Doctor Sharrock, Bishop of Telmessen,
V. A.

Rev. G. Bruning

Mr. Anderson

P. Harrison

T. White

Mr. Pembridge

Mr. Sanderson

Mr. Collingridge

Mr. Grafton

R. Fishwick

Mr. Lowe

Mr. Hawley

Mr. Pierpoint

Mr. Thomas Faram

Abbé de la Cour

Mr. Knight

Thomas

SUBSCRIBERS.

Thomas Weld, Esq. 3 copies
 Mr. William Langley
 Mrs. Clough, 2 do.
 More, Hengrove-Hall
 Miss Moore, Richmond
 Messrs. Keating, Brown and Keating, Bookfellers,
 London, 100 copies.

The following subscribers have been added to the list for the year 1841 in their proper order.

Right Rev. Doctor Douglas, Bishop of Cornwall
 V. A.

Right Rev. Doctor Gibson, Bishop of Aachen
 V. A.

Right Rev. Doctor Sharrock, Bishop of Tennesse
 V. A.

Rev. O. Bunnings
 Mr. Anderson

F. Harrison
 T. White

Mr. Pennington
 M. Genderson

M. Collingridge
 M. Gorton

R. Fawcett
 Mr. Jones

Mr. Hawley
 Mr. Harpout

Mr. Thomas Parnam
 A. de la Cour

Mr. Langley

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

Book the First.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

CHAPTER I.

Is Atheism upon Principle a thing possible?

SECTION I.

WHICH is the first
(1) **QUESTION.** knowledge of Man, and the most important
of all?

ANSWER. It is the knowledge of the sovereign Lord and Master of the world, the first beginning, and last end of all things.

(2) **Q.** What grounds have you for so vast and so noble an idea?

A. I have the clearest dictates of reason, the most natural feelings of the human heart, nay the testimony of my senses, that inform

me of the beauty, the regularity, the numberless wonders which this universe exhibits.

(3) Q. Is it true that there are men of sense and information, who refuse to acknowledge a God, and oppose to this belief, reasons, which to them appear convincing?

A. It cannot be doubted but there are Atheists, that is, men who deny the existence of God; but it is hardly possible for them to do it in earnest, and for their words to be the real expression of their thoughts. The man who preaches up to others that monstrous doctrine, says within himself: *There is a God.*

(4) Q. Since the mind of man is liable to every species of error: since there is no opinion so extravagant, that has not been adopted by some philosopher or other; why should not the opinion that realizes Atheism, find proselytes, as well as others? Is the darkness in which God involves the temerity of man, is the blindness he inflicts on presumptuous reason, so determined in its measure, that justice combined with omnipotence can add nothing to it?

A. These considerations might lead one to think that, in certain moments, the Atheist does really stun his reason into an acquiescence in the result of his sophisms: but this is a constraint on human reason, too violent to last. The light returns, notwithstanding all his efforts

efforts to extinguish it. He makes up his mind: he goes on speaking and writing agreeably to the system once adopted: but his life will be still divided between serious doubts and some moments of a kind of persuasion: between the dismal prospect of annihilation, and the invincible dread of the judgments of God. Truth will often get the upper hand, and fill with terroure a soul, whose sweetest comfort it was destined to be; and thus it is that we must reconcile the two opinions about the existence of Atheists; and not hastily condemn respectable characters, who have not refused to acknowledge it*; nor others in greater number, who have thought it impossible.

B 2

(5) 2.

* Bourdaloue, after distinguishing between Atheists of will and Atheists of belief; between those who wish there were no God, and those who really believe there is none, admits the existence of both (*Serm. on the Festival of S. F. Xavier. End of the 1st Point.*) Tournemine doubts only whether there be many pure downright Atheists. (*Mem. Trev. May 1735.*) M. Bergier is of the same opinion; (*Exam. du Mater. T. 2. Ch. xi. §. 3.*) M. Pompignan, Bish. of Pui, says in general of the real Unbelievers, both Atheists and others: *I do not say, but there may be people of this kind; I only contend, that their number is vastly smaller than it seems to be.* (*1st Query on Incredulity, P. 8.*) Nicole seems to acknowledge great numbers of them: "You must know," says he, "that the grand heresy of the world, is no longer Lutheranism nor Calvinism, but Atheism; and that there are Atheists of all sorts: some bonâ, some malâ fide, some steady, some wavering, some tempted." (*Lett. to a Lady. Lett. 25.*) I do not well understand in what sense M. Nicole supposes bonâ fide Atheists, while the Apostle assures us, that the light of God shines before their eyes, so as to render them quite inexcusable.

Invisibilia enim Dei a creaturâ mundi per ea quæ facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur; semperpiterna quo-
Rom. I.

que ejus virtus et Divinitas, ita, ut sint inexcusabiles.

(5) 2. Is there not some other consideration, that accounts for this difference of opinion among the learned on the subject of Atheists?

Leves gustus in Philosophia movere fortasse possent ad Atheismum; sed pleniores haustus ad Religionem reducere. De Augm. Scient. Lib. 1.

Dei vestigia passim Effugis, at delere nequis: Tete illa sequuntur. Antilucet. lib. 9.

A. This difference may again proceed from one's not having viewed reason under all her aspects; nor philosophy, in all the degrees it exists among men. Lord Bacon used to say that philosophy, when deep, leads necessarily to God: but that it was perhaps not impossible, that shallow philosophy should beget Atheism; because, the latter, instead of soaring high, and taking comprehensive views, instead of embracing the whole concatination of the parts, and their dependance on the sovereign mover; sinks on the contrary, severs and contracts its reflections, fastens on the seeming irregularity of second causes, and loses sight of the totality of things, and of the principle that produced them. It is possible, as the learned refuter of Lucretius very properly observes, that one may overlook certain traces of the Deity, but it is not possible to efface them all, and to conceal from one's self, the whole process of its wonderful operations. If a view of some parts of nature does not always, and in all minds, evidently connect with the first cause; surely the universality of beings, their collective aspect, their references, their functions,

tions, and destination must necessarily fix the attention of the philosopher*. The horror and silence of nature, in the opinion of the Atheist, compleats the most invincible demonstration, for any one that can relish the philosophy of the heart.

(6) 2. Is there not a celebrated writer who seems to differ in opinion from Chancellor Bacon, and to consider Atheism as the offspring of profound philosophy? "Philosophy," says he, "begins with confuting errors; but, if not stopped there, it will attack truth itself; and, if suffered to go on, will proceed so far, as not to know where it is, nor where to settle. It may be compared to those corrosive powders, which, after consuming the proud flesh, would gnaw into the very quick, rot the bones, and penetrate to the marrow."

Bayle Dic-
tion. Hist. et
Crit. Art.
Acosia.

A. What this author says is by no means contrary to the opinion of the learned Englishman. It is no sign of great philosophy to be rash and restless, and curious beyond measure; to judge upon slight grounds, to pronounce upon every thing, to overlook the boundaries of human reason and understanding. A little more

* *Ita ordinantur omnia officiis et finibus suis in pulchritudinem universitatis, ut quod horremus in parte, si in toto consideremus, plurimum placeat.* August. De verâ Religione, cap. 40. n. 76.

more thought and experience would correct those failings. This passage from Bayle, gives us, by the bye, an excellent picture of his own philosophy.



SECTION II.

(7) Q. WHAT are we to infer from this controversy, that divides the learned on the existence of Atheists?

A. This controversy forms a strong presumption against Atheism, and proves to what a degree that system is shocking to human reason; since people are not yet agreed on the possibility of its existence. The Atheists never doubted the possibility of believing a God: and it is not as yet decided whether it be possible to believe there is no God.

Diction. En-
cyclop. Art.
Atheïs.

(8) Q. Have not the compilers of a certain big Dictionary asserted, *that the Atheist, in consequence of his sophisms, adheres as firmly to his opinion, as the Theist does to that of God's existence, from the demonstrations he has of it?*

A. Yes: but it remains then for those gentlemen to inform us, 1. What use there is in human reason, and what advantage Truth and Evidence have above sophistry? 2. Whence come those doubts, that swarm in all the writings of Atheists

Atheists and Unbelievers in general? 3. Why does the sight of death, and sometimes a slight indisposition recall them to the belief of a God, and even to a full profession of all the articles of the Christian faith?

(9) Q. Are the doubts you mention well ascertained?

A. There is no reading the works of the Unbelievers, nor observing their conduct, without finding these doubts at every step. Lucretius, the hero and bard of Epicurus's system, after all his attacks upon the doctrine of the soul's immortality, confesses himself completely ignorant of her nature,

Ignoratur enim quæ sit natura animæ.

And, in another place, he orders far away from this terrestrial world that part of man, which, he says, derives its origin from Heaven.

*Cedit enim retro, de terrâ quod fuit ante
In terram; sed, quod missum est ex ætheris arce,
Hoc sursum cali fulgentia templa receptant.*

Epicurus his master, is not more consistent. Bayle observes that he made himself exceedingly uneasy about what might happen after him, which, in the system of annihilation, was folly indeed. His extreme fear of the Gods shows, to a demonstration, how little he was convinced of the omnipotence of his atoms. Never, says Cicero, *Lib. 1. De Nat. Deorum.*
did I see a man in so much dread of two things, which he said that no body ought to be afraid of,
Death,

Spir. of Laws. 25. Ch. 1. B. *Death, and the Gods.* Montesquieu says that this fear is common to all the Atheists. *The pious man and the Atheist are evermore talking about religion: It is what the one loves, and the other fears.* If those people are so thoroughly convinced, why are they so busy in looking for every new publication that irreligion produces? Why so eager to read them—so zealous to cry them up? A man thoroughly convinced, is content with the proofs he has: looks for no more: and would think it time lost, to discuss any farther a subject on which he is fully satisfied.

The author of the Book on *Spirit*, professes an universal doubt; because, says he, *there is no sign at the Inn where Evidence sets up.*

A man in high favour with the friends of the Epicurean system, and others that border on it, speaks thus in a Dialogue truly Chinese, as to both the cloth and the cut.

Kou. Who told you there was another life?

Cu-Su. * On the single doubt, you ought to conduct yourself as if there was.

Philos. Dic-
tion. Chi-
nese Cate-
chism.

Kou. But if I am certain there is not?

Cu-Su. I defy you.

Buckingham confesses that his doubts never quitted him, and that he carried them to the grave:

*Dubius, sed non improbus, vixi:
Incertus morior.*

Many

* This is the Tutor instructing the young Prince.

Many of Spinoza's followers, finding that, in their pretended demonstrations, Evidence was slipping from them every instant, have fallen into a kind of senseless Pyrrhonism, called *Egoïsm*, in which every individual imagines himself the only being in existence.

See Ram-
say's Disc.
on Mytho-
logy, 1st
Part.

The other enemies of Religion, whether Atheists or Deists, are not more steady in their assertions*. They not only combat one another, without being able to agree in any one point, but they contradict in one place what they said in another. "Each libertine, accord-

" to his present whim, frames within him-

" a Creed of his own, and for himself

Paneg. of S.
Thom.

" only, following blindly his own ideas; rea-

" soning now one way, now another, ac-

" cording to his actually prevailing humour;

" fixing on nothing, and contesting every

" thing†." The truth of this reflection of

Bourdaloüe's

* I prove hereafter that the generality of Deists are either Atheists or bad reasoners; and therefore we shall not always be very nice in distinguishing them.

† The reader must not be surprised that, on many occasions, where we might have quoted the Scripture and the Fathers, we adduce Philosophers against other Philosophers, or one and the same Philosopher thinking and reasoning in a manner opposite to that which he adopted in another fit or mood of thinking. This is a kind of military stratagem, wherein we employ the language and weapons of the enemy to cover our own march and to prevent mistrust.

Mutemus clypeos, Danaûmque insignia nobis.
Aptemus.—Æneid. 2.

Bourdaloüe's is sensibly felt by whoever has read the works of those Gentlemen. It is curious to see what a multitude of contradictions occur in the single *System of Nature*. We refer to Vol. 1. Chap. xvii. and to Vol. 2. Chap. xiv. of the *Exam. du Materialisme*, by M. Gerbier. Reconcile all that with *as firm a persuasion, as the Conviction arising from Demonstrations.*



SECTION III.

(10) 2. DOES the revolution, that generally takes place with unbelievers at the approach of death, afford any proof in favour of Religion?

A. It proves, at least, they were not thoroughly persuaded. "It is not," says Bayle, "an extinguished faith, it is only a fire covered up with ashes. They feel its activity the instant they consult themselves, and particularly at the approach of danger. Then they show themselves more dismayed than other men. The remembrance of having shewn more contempt for holy things than they really felt, and of having attempted to withdraw themselves inwardly from the yoke, redoubles their uneasiness." M. Pom-
pignan, in his queries on incredulity. Q. 1. sets

Diction.
Hist. and
Crit. Art.
Desbar-
reaux.

Vol. 3. P.
337.

sets this thought in the fullest light. Massillon, on the same head, is moving as well as instructive. "Answer," says he, "all the difficulties of one of those people, who boast themselves unbelievers: nonplus him: reduce him, not to have a word to reply. He is not yours as yet: you have not as yet made a conquest of him. He stands wrapped up in himself, as if he had reasons in reserve still more powerful, that he does not vouchsafe to tell you. He still holds out, and opposes a mysterious determined countenance to all the arguments he can not confute. You pity his madness, his infatuation; but you mistake the matter: pity only his want of candour. For, let me suppose him, at his leaving you, seized with a mortal illness: run to his bedside: you'll find the pretended unbeliever a convert: his doubts are vanished: the judgments of God, that he pretended not to believe, strike him with terror. The Minister of Christ, on being called in, needs no arguments to undeceive him: the dying Unbeliever spares him that trouble: the dying Unbeliever confesses the falsehood, the insincerity of his past Blasphemies, and makes public amends for them: all he wants is consolation. The fear that pervades him comes only from the Faith he already

Sermon on
the doubts
concerning
Religion.

“ already had : his sickness has not given him
 “ any new information ; but it has touched his
 “ heart.”—D'Alembert observes, that, “ the
 “ desire of living with passions uncontrouled,
 “ and the vanity of thinking otherwise than
 “ the multitude, have made more Unbelievers
 “ than the delusions of Sophistry. When Va-
 “ nity and the Passions are silent, Faith returns.”

All these observations are contained in a beautiful passage of Tertullian*. This Father acknowledges in the soul of man a natural, invincible propensity to Religion, and a kind of impossibility to eradicate that precious seed, ever ready to grow, and expand itself in the heart of even the most corrupt, or most systematick Unbeliever. And certainly this impression must have sunk very deep into our nature, since all the violence of the Passions, all the allurements of Vice, and the illusions of false Philosophy, working from the earliest time of life, are not able entirely to efface it, and since traces of it still remain, which, in spite of himself, the Unbeliever acknowledges.†

(II). 2.

* *Hæc est summa delicti nolentium recognoscere quod ignorare non possunt. . . . Vultis ex animæ ipsius testimonio comprobemus ; quæ licet carcere corporis pressa, licet institutionibus pravis circumscripta, licet libidinibus et concupiscentiis evigorata, licet falsis Diis exancillata, cum tamen respicit, ut ex crapulâ, ut ex somno, ut ex aliquâ valetudine, sanitatem suam potitur, Deum nominat, hoc sola, quia propriè hic est unus Deus verus. . . . O Testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ !* Apol. c. 17.

† *Sæpe expugnaverunt me a juventute mea ; etenim non potuerunt mihi.* Psalm. 128.

(11) Q. Might we not think, that it is owing to the enfeebled state of the understanding, and to the derangement of the organs, that Unbelievers become converts at the time of Death?

A. (1) If those Unbelievers were always inwardly persuaded of the systems they have adopted, how comes it that this thorough persuasion ceases just at the time the organs begin to feel the approach of Death? Whence this antipathy between the feebleness of the organs and the doctrines of Philosophy? How comes it particularly, that the plain, honest Christian, who, in his health, never pretended to the honour of Free-thinking, how, I say, does it come to pass, that he is not subject to those revolutions, and that his enfeebled organs never prompt him to say any thing contrary to what he said and believed when in health. "I defy," says a judicious writer speaking of Voltaire's death, "I defy any one to quote me
 " a single example of such remorse, such terrour,
 " in one that has lived faithful to the dictates of
 " the Gospel. The sorrow, the dread experienced by the virtuous man, bears no resemblance to the remorse and terrour of a bad liver.
 " One must be very weak, or very unfair, to
 " attribute the difference to the feebleness
 " of their organs; since both are supposed at
 " the

“ the same distance from their last hour. It
 “ is in their past life the cause is to be looked
 “ for. The one hopes in the God he loved and
 “ served : the other dreads the God he offend-
 “ ed : it is the reality of his crimes, not of
 “ his fever, that causes his despair.”

(2) Such a change, if it happened only in extreme old age, or after a long illness, might perhaps be attributed to the organs. But we see every day those happy revolutions take place in the bloom of life, and upon the very first attack of a disorder. It is not therefore by the weakness of the mind that we are to account for the phenomenon. On the contrary, the Unbeliever's mind is never more indisposed, than when his body is in soundest health. The blood ever boiling in his veins, the gall in a perpetual ferment, the brain crowded with wild, gloomy conceits, puts it almost beyond his power to reason with any degree of common sense. Then indeed he may write what he pleases : he may annihilate Heaven and Earth with a stroke of his pen : he may change the nature of things : he may create worlds on worlds, &c. But when, upon a sensation of illness, these commotions have subsided, reason returns ; he sees things with the same calmness that others do : he begins to see the light dawning upon him out of
 the

the clouds of Passion and Sophistry : he opens his eyes to it, and laments his past blindness.

Oculis errantibus alto

Quæsit calo lucem, ingemuitque repertâ. Æneid. 4.

Tertullian says, that, in those cases, the soul returns to herself, and recovers the free use of her powers, as if she awoke out of a profound sleep, or out of the fumes of wine, or the ravings of a fever. See his words that we have already quoted.



SECTION. IV.

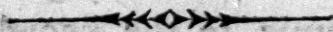
(12) Q. SUCH a change proves well enough that those gentlemen were never thoroughly convinced of the systems they undertook to substitute to the knowledge of God and the sanctity of his worship. But is there not another reflection arising from it to the advantage of Religion?

A. The solid reasons, whereby many of those gentlemen, in their sober senses, have witnessed the truth and sanctity of the Christian Religion, are valuable testimonies, that do it honour ; and amount to a complete refutation of the aspersions thrown upon it by men, whom temporary Errours, that never took deep root with them, had seduced.

(13) Q. Might it not be Prejudice that brought back those men of genius, to the impressions they received in their childhood?

A. Whoever

A. Whoever reads what they have written against Religion, will not be tempted to suppose there could remain much prejudice with them in its favour. The impressions of their childhood had given way to impressions of a quite contrary nature. But when the first are agreeable to the dictates of reason, and serve as a ground-work to virtue and happiness, it is hard, or rather impossible entirely to efface them. They may be weakened, they may be removed for a time: but in the lucid intervals of sound reason, they will appear again, and rise upon the ruins of the systems that took place of them.*



SECTION. V.

(14) Q. ARE those happy changes frequent, which adversity, sickness, or the sight of

* The conversions of Unbelievers at the time of Death, after their long struggles against Religion, put me in mind of the wise saying of an Ancient: *Ego tanti penitere non emo.* The loss of Religion, like that of Virtue, is naturally followed by remorse; and when the heathen, a domineering, tyrannizing, persecuting cabal, advise our young literators to sacrifice their talents and their labours to the glory of Philosophism, their answer, if they were wise, would be, *Ego tanti penitere non emo.*—I don't purchase at so high a rate the necessity of repenting.

of Death is apt to bring about in all kinds of Unbelievers?

A. There are but few of them that have been seen to keep up to the last their sworn attachment to antichristian systems. La Metrie, Boulainvilliers, Du Marfais, the Marquis d'Argens, Boulanger, &c, are striking examples of this kind of conversion. The last mentioned has declared, *he always preserved in his heart a great respect for Religion: that, in writing against it, he had always smothered the voice of his conscience: that he had let himself be carried away by the violence of his imagination, by the encomiums and the applause given him by the Philosophers.* He shut his door against the seducers, called for the last Sacraments, and received them. Maupertuis, who had reduced all the proofs of the existence of God to this algebraick expression, $Ar + nRB$, died in the hands of two Capuchin Friars. • Montagne, the forerunner of modern Incredulity, died, as he was getting out of bed to adore the Eucharist. It is well known, how often the Oracle of our Philosophers relented in his hatred to Christianity, against which he had vowed eternal war. A frightful dream has often been the means of making him go and confess his crimes at the feet of the ministers of the Church; which gave rise to the saying, that Unbelievers

Sequel of
the Apol. of
Relig. Vol.
2. p. 25.
Edit. of
1769.

*Vivunt, ut
nunquam mori-
rituri; mori-
riuntur, ut
semper Vici-
turi.*

they

they expected to live for ever.* *They are no credit to us*, said Sainthibal, a celebrated Free-thinker, as Bayle tells us, *They are no credit to us on their Death beds: they degrade themselves; they flinch; they die like other men.*†

(15) Q. What is to be thought of those, who, to the extremity of old age, and even to death, preserve an unfortunate steadiness in their errors?

A. All that can be said is, that prejudice, human respect, and inveterate passion are capable

See above
n. 4.

* In 1760, he is rechristianized, hears Mass, and that, a midnight Mass at Christmas, converts Calvinists, &c.... See his *Letter to M. Albergati*. In 1766, he writes an heathenish Ode on the Dauphin's death, preceded and followed by a number of Publications replete with Impiety and Obscenity. In 1768, he is again reconverted: confesses to F. Adam: in 1769, to F. Joseph, a Capuchin. The same year he writes the *History of Lewis XV.* and, some time after, his *Queries on the Encyclopædia*, *The Bible at last explained*, in which he has laid up all his treasures of Incredulity and Immorality: in 1778, being sick in Paris, he confesses to the Abbé Gautier, and declares he means to die a Christian and a Catholic. A few days after, he is again rephilosophized, gets himself received a Free Mason, and suffers to be adored as a God. In short, by a dreadful effect of God's Judgments, he dies in fits of rage and despair, crying out: *I am lost, I am abandoned by God and Men*; biting in convulsions of madness, his fingers and arms, devouring his own excrements; with refinements of Blasphemy, unknown to Julian and Vanini at the time of their shocking deaths. A frightful spectacle, and one, which, in the opinion of Mr. Tronchin his Physician, would have undeceived all his Disciples, had it been possible for them to assist at it. (See his article in the Hist. Diction. Aufbourg. 1781.)

† The Unbelievers have always held in high esteem the intrepidity or insensibility of a man on his death bed. The very

ble of resisting all the lights of Faith, and all the stings of Conscience. If, in the alternative of doubt, and a kind of persuasion, which chequers the life of some Unbelievers, death should intervene at a time, when the illusion of Sophisms is prevalent, they are steeled against all thoughts of returning to God. Mallebranche thinks, the positiveness and obstinacy of some old reprobates, proceeds from the stiffness and inflexibility of the fibres of the brain, which, according to him, occasions an almost invincible indocility.—An elegant and judicious Historian is nearly of the same opinion*. A celebrated orator accounts for it by the reliance that aged men generally have on their own knowledge and experience†. It is very natural to look for the cause in the justice and severity of God's judgments, who blinds his enemies, and withdraws from them the light they refused to make use of. Those, who are always for finding

very ancient and very famous Pyrrho, whose principle was to doubt of every thing, seeing his fellow passengers struck with terror at the thoughts of a shipwreck, which appeared to them inevitable, desired them to look at a hog that was in the ship, feeding as usual: *there is*, said he, *what the insensibility of a Philosopher ought to be*. It must be allowed that Philosophers are not over delicate in the choice of their examples.

* *Inclinatâ ætate, mores sensuque in suâ formâ indurescunt.* Sacch. H. S. J.

† *Pravi errores in sensibus prudentiæ fiduciâ roborantur.* C. Porée De credulitate in Doctrinis.

finding remorse in the Unbeliever, and the scandalous offender, *are not acquainted*, says Bos-fuet, *with all the ways of God. They do not sufficiently consider that deadly slumber and false peace, in which he sometimes leaves his greatest enemies*†.

Ipfi vero non cognoverunt vias meas, quibus juravi irâ meâ introibunt in requiem meam Pl. 94.

(16) Q. Is there not something like mystery in the attachment of an eminent genius to mere childish suppositions, that contradict themselves in all their parts, and his aversion to truths the best established, and at the same time the most comfortable?

A. The

‡ Hence it is not hard to infer, that the conversions mentioned here will not be long without growing scarce. When the spirit of Irreligion is consummated, and diffused through the whole body of a nation; when it obtains triumphal honours, and arrives at celebrity and glory; it sets all the passions loose, it begets vices of a monstrous kind, that degrade and brutify the human soul: it stifles every rational and decent affection, and deprives it of the energy requisite to rise to the contemplation of the Eternal Truths. This is the pit mentioned by the wiseman, where Impiety feeds on the contempt of every thing that is fit to reclaim her. *Impius, tum in profundum venerit, contemnet.* Prov. 18. On the other hand, the spirit of frivolousness and dissipation, becoming general and predominant, hinders men from studying, and going deep into the knowledge of the truths of Faith, which, for want of Christian education, are no longer relished nor known in the age, of all ages the fittest for instruction; whereby it becomes impossible for them to revive in the soul a light that never was in it: whereas the most famous among the Unbelievers, the heads and heroes of the party, who were once well acquainted with these truths, were never able to do away the impression they made. The same reflections will serve to account for the insensibility of the savages. (See *Infra*. n. 93, 98, 156.)

A. The Christian, informed by the Holy Scriptures of the conduct that God has promised to follow with regard to man, sees no great mystery in that. To the contrary, he would think it a very great one, if, after misapplying, as many do, their reason and their faculties, they remained free from blindness and seduction. Nay, it would go near staggering his faith; because that would not appear to him consonant with the anathemas thundered out as well against those who let themselves be misled by pride and self-sufficiency, as against those who counteract their belief by a conduct that God reprobates, and that is incompatible with the sanctity of his law*.

Tertullian thought that God left designedly a mixture of darkness in the greatest truths, in order to blind the proud men who would prove refractory

* There is not in all the Holy Scripture, a threat more severe than this, nor that occurs more frequently. *Perdam sapientiam sapientum, et prudentiam prudentum reprobabo.* 1 Cor. 1. *Comprehendam Sapientes in Astutiâ eorum.* 1. Cor. 3. *Abcondisti hæc a sapientibus et prudentibus, et revelasti ea parvulis.* Matt. 11. *Stultitia enim est illi, et non potest intelligere, quia spiritualiter examinatur.* 1 Cor. 11. *In judicium ego in hunc mundum veni, ut, qui non vident, videant, et qui vident, cæci fiant.* Joan. 9. *Domine, quid factum est, quia manifestaturus es nobis teipsum, et non mundo?* Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum servabit. &c. Joan. 14. *Finis autem præcepti est charitas de corde puro, et conscientia bonâ, et fide non fictâ, a quibus quidam aberrantes conversi sunt in vaniloquium.* 1. Tim. 1. *Habens bonam conscientiam, quam quidam repellentes circa fidem naufragaverunt.* Ibid. v. 19, &c. We must then consider the blindness of Unbelievers, as the visible accomplishment of the word of God. *Verba Prophetarum quæ per omne Sabbatum leguntur Judicantes impleverunt.* Act. 13.

refractory to his word, and the men of corrupt morals, who would disgrace their faith by the vices it condemns: that the Holy Scripture itself was become for Heretics a stumbling block†. “There is,” says St. Augustin, “in Religion, light enough to illumine the upright heart, and darkness enough to blind the Unbeliever.” The very idea we have of God includes obscurity sufficient to darken and set astray presumptuous reason. As evident as his existence, so inscrutable is the nature of God. Vainly have the most celebrated Philosophers made it the subject of their meditations; it has always baulked their impotent endeavours. And what wonder that men of pride and self-sufficiency, mortified at the inutility of their researches, misled by the weakness of that Reason they thought so clear-sighted, should undertake to persuade the world, that what they cannot comprehend does not exist; and that, taking the narrow limits of their pigmy powers for the limits of a Being that has none, they should be so ridiculous, as to bestow eternity and omnipotence on Matter and Motion? Other thoughts relative to this subject will be found in an excellent *Discourse*

† *Nec periclitor dicere ipsas quoque Scripturas sic esse ex voluntate Dei compositas, ut Hæreticis materiam subministrarent.* De Præscrip. c. 39.

upon *Incredulity* by F. Chapelain, p. 178, 186, 188, 191, 200. and in a Sermon of F. Bourdalouë, *On the Works of Faith*, &c.

SECTION VI.

(17) Q. THESE reflections shew very well, how men of learning in the opinion of the world may reject Religion and the very existence of God. But is there not a great number of libertines, who rank themselves among the Atheists and other systematick Unbelievers, without belonging to that class of reasoners?

A. There is; and the number is very great: which has caused some authors to swell immoderately the catalogue of real Unbelievers. Thus, F. Merfenne reckons 50,000 Atheists in Paris, twelve of them frequently in one house. To refute this computation, and to reduce almost to naught the number of systematic Unbelievers, it will be sufficient to distinguish the different Classes, which a want of attention has confounded.

(18) Q. How do you distinguish them?

A. We may, with an ingenious and real critic, reduce them to five classes: the stupid Unbelievers, the vicious Unbelievers, the fashionable

shionable Unbelievers, the affected Unbelievers, the Unbelievers upon principle.

(19) Q. What do you understand by these different denominations?

A. The *Stupid Unbeliever* is one, who never raised his thoughts to the Author of the world, or its destination. He feels neither the force of the arguments that prove the existence of God, nor the weakness of the objections wherewith the Atheists impugn it: all he can do is to affect the air of those people, and to take their ton: he utters blasphemies without knowing what he says: he is an echo that repeats sounds. Such a man is to be pitied.

The *Vicious Unbeliever* has perhaps faculties, that might give energy to his soul, did he not smother them in the bud. His only pleasure is that of brutifying himself every day more and more, by checking the cries of his conscience and the light of his understanding: his most serious occupation is to amuse himself: not that he finds much pleasure even in that; but he dreads remaining one instant at rest, for fear his reason should awaken; and the better to secure himself from her rebukes, he turns Atheist and associates with other blasphemers. To-day he is quiet, he is happy; there is no God, no soul: to-morrow the case is altered; he believes, he trembles, or, at least, he doubts.

The

The *Fashionable Unbeliever* aspires to the reigning ton : but that is not to be attained merely by vice practised with effrontery : one, besides that, must be a Philosopher : a Philosopher therefore he becomes. A Philosopher, according to him, is a man who distinguishes himself from the vulgar, by believing nothing : the book on *Spirit*, the *Philosophical Dictionary* are his favourite books ; never did he read any thing so clever, so forcible, so closely reasoned, so well connected, so highly amusing. He tries his own hand ; ridicules Religion ; succeeds ; is quite astonished to find himself such a wit, such a genius ; his incredulity ceases with the applause given him by his fellows, and with a phrenzy for aping the fashions.

The *Affected Unbeliever* assumes an air of gravity and austerity. It is a mask that covers an empty scull : his heart is as void of feeling as his head is of understanding : he speaks with a tone that suits his mien most compleatly : he has looked for truth at the fountain head : Nature in person has held converse with him : he has read the works of all the celebrated writers, and has found Atheism in them all : this man is entitled to nothing but contempt : reason would be lost upon him, and would serve only to flatter his fastidious ignorance.

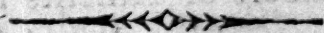
The *Unbeliever upon Principle* is he whose possibility we have been discussing. If there does exist any such, their Errour may be owing to some fatal impresson given them in their youth, to some flaw in their education, to some erroneous principle unguardedly admitted, to the false light in which truth has been set before them, to the distractions that rendered them deaf to the voice of Reason, &c. &c. We shall not repeat here what we have already said.

See above,
n. 4. & 15.

(20) Q. May not the whole body of Unbelievers be distributed into classes different from those you have mentioned?

A. A modern writer divides them into four classes, which take in, sure enough, all those of the Unbelieving kind, that ever came within my knowledge. The first is that of the *Laughers*, who have nothing to do but laugh, smile, and sneer, as occasion requires: They never say any thing, for fear of committing themselves. The second is that of the *Jesters*, who, having laid in an ample stock of puns, quizzes and conundrums, of clerical anecdotes of the sprightly kind, have it in charge to time and place them properly; to enliven the conversation, or to turn it off; when, growing too deep or too serious, it threatens not to terminate to the credit of Philosophy. In the third class

class, shine the *Questioners*; whose business it is to puzzle and embarrass the champions of the Gospel, pestering them with endless *Queries*, which they never give them time to answer. The *Reasoners* form the fourth class. These are the Disputers and Arguers of the Party. Their rank is, without doubt, the most honourable: but an excess of zeal throws them into monstrous errors and contradictions: a misfortune to which those of the other classes are not exposed; which would incline one to think, that the *Laughers' Class*, as it is the most numerous, is also the safest, at least in this life.



SECTION VII.

(21) Q. IS there not in China a whole Republic of Atheists, that of the lettered Chinese?

A. This Republic is as imaginary as that of Plato. The Prince of modern Unbelievers assures us that the lettered Chinese are Deists: that *they believe the rewards and punishments of the other life, a Paradise and a Hell.** The Author of the

c 2 Book

* Essay on Univ. Hist. Vol. i. c. 6. p. 91. Boulainv. Diner: p. 43. He teaches the contrary in *La Philos. de l'Histoire*. ch. 18. p. 95. In the *Dict. Philos. Art. Ame.* He returns to his former opinion, and acknowledges in the lettered Chinese the belief of a God and a Providence. We must not expect any thing very consistent from those gentlemen. They have brought matter of fact, as well as reasoning, under the dominion of fancy.

Book on *Spirit* tells us, that the Jesuits acknowledge the atheism of the lettered Chinese; but he wrongs those Fathers, who have always asserted the contrary. F. Parennin, who knew the Chinese much better than Helvetius, refutes victoriously this imagination in a letter to M. De Mairan. *Lett. Edifiantes. Vol. xxi. p. 134. &c. &c.* There are in China three Religions, that of the Emperor, the Princes and the Lettered, who offer sacrifice to *Tien*, Heaven, to *Xanti* the virtue of Heaven; Idolatry, and the sect of Conjurers. The compilers of the *Trevoux Dictionary*, under the art. *China*, inform us there are great numbers of Atheists in that Empire. But under the art. *Pho*, they observe, that this Atheism is not upon principle, but an implicit deference paid to the doctrine of the pretended *Pho*, who, as his disciples say, declared at his death, that Naught was the Father of all things. It is the *αυλος εφρα* that makes Atheists in China, as it does among the coxcombs of Europe. A learned man, high in the fashion, has said it: that is enough: who will offer to gainsay it? Libertinism and bad reasoning make numbers of Atheists in China as well as among us. But, that the generality of the lettered in China

Infra, B.
4. Ch. 3.
Art. 6. §.
6. n. 380.

are Atheists, is one falsehood: and, that it is so among us, is another. We will shew hereafter, what a lettered Chinese is: but we must beware of prepossessing ourselves with too high

an opinion of these Doctors, to whom our Philosophers so confidently refer us.

SECTION VIII.

(22) Q. WHAT are we to think of some eminent characters, whom the Unbelievers claim as their own, though their lives and writings bear the most honourable testimony to Religion?

A. Impiety, says M. Seguier in his learned *Requisitoire*, of the 18th of July 1770, does not stick at violating the ashes of the dead, and blackening their characters; and perhaps too, thinks it thereby does honour to their memory: it raises them from the grave, in order, from their celebrated names which it usurps, to derive the ascendancy it stands in need of. The weight of those imputations may be estimated by the two capital proofs, that are brought against M. Fenelon. The first is that Fenelon parodied, as follows, one of Lulli's airs.

Jeune, j'étois trop sage,
Et voulois tout scavoir;
Je ne veux en partage

Que badinage,
Et touche au dernier age,
Sans rien prévoir.

To virtue in my youth devoted,
Learning was my only passion;
But now a profelyte to pleasure,
In hoary locks I sport and play,
Heedless of hereafter.

Whereupon

Histoire de
Louis XV.
T. I. P.
209.

Whereupon I observe, 1. That the fact is a fiction. Voltaire says, he has it from the Marquis of Fenelon. He takes care to quote a dead witness. While the Marquis was living, Voltaire never thought of appealing to him. How could the Marquis of Fenelon, a man according to Voltaire himself, of so much virtue and religion, go and reveal such an anecdote as this to the ringleader of Unbelievers? Whoever has read *Voltaire's errors*, *Voltaire's picture drawn by himself*, *The Philosophical Portrait of Voltaire's mind*, &c, &c. must be too well acquainted with his veracity, not to think him very capable of supporting a fabulous story with a lye.

2. The lines in question, are among the poetical works of Lady Guion. She therein expresses that total disengagement from created things, that prevents man from opening his eyes to futurity, from looking into it, and making himself uneasy about it. But, suppose the lines to be Fenelon's; how can it be inferred, that in his old days Fenelon believed nothing? In this case, Fenelon could certainly mean no more, than Lady Guion herself did.

Voltaire's second proof, is a letter of Ramfay's, wherein he says, that Fenelon, had he been born in England, would have expanded his genius, and not dreaded to give scope to his principles, which no body was acquainted with. This again is a dead evidence, that is called

called upon to witness a thing he never said, nor could say. Ramsay, convinced by Fenelon of the truth of the Catholic Religion, appeared his whole life after as much attached to it, as he was to the memory of his illustrious teacher. How can he be supposed to have written a letter, that would be a most flagrant insult to the disciple and the master?—A letter that would prove both the one and the other to be mere hypocrites, who sacrificed their principles to circumstances of time and place? If Ramsay ever wrote any thing of that kind, he could mean only the political principles of the author of *Telemachus*, and not any doubts of his on the truth of Religion. Ramsay gives the most minute account of the doctrine of that celebrated Archbishop; and, to read the extract of his letter inserted in *Les Grands Hommes Vengés*, vol. ii. article *Fenelon*, is alone sufficient to dispel the cloud that Voltaire would fain draw over the memory of that great Man.* In the same work there is a compleat vindication

* The same considerations render very suspicious the attribution made to Ramsay of a posthumous work, entitled *Philosophical Principles of Religion*. 2. Vols. 4to. The Author, on pretence of speaking only of Fenelon's sentiments, advances paradoxes of all kinds, such as the transmigration of souls, the animation of the beasts by devils, the ending of the pains of Hell. If Voltaire had any knowledge of this work, no doubt, he declined adducing it in proof, because he considered the Author, whoever he was, as a man deranged in his head.

vindication of S'Gravesand, Bossuet, Huet, &c. The *Athei detecti* of Hardouin, which has been always considered as a collection of dreams, is nothing to the discoveries made by Voltaire. When our Unbelievers take a fancy for Deism, they find Deists every where: when they are for Pyrrhonism, or Atheism, these two classes begin to swarm with Profelytes. One would think the notion of having a great number of associates settles their uneasiness, and justifies in the eyes of reason, the extravagance of their systems; and that, frightened at the sight of so many great men full of veneration for the fundamental truths of Religion, they want to form a counterpart to the offensive picture. The Unbelievers, says humourously M***, are like drunken men, who, right or wrong, will have those that are sober to drink on still.

SECTION

head, and was convinced that the public would say: "He that applauds such extravagancies as these, is very capable of fathering them upon others, and putting them under the protection of a celebrated name." It is awkward, however to set down to Fenelon's account things that clash so visibly with the temper of his genius, and with all we ever knew of that great man. But, what must finally sink the credit of the author of this work, is his assertion, that this system is conformable to Fenelon's belief, as well as to the *decisions of the Church*. It is by the second of these conformities, that we are to judge of the first.

SECTION IX.

(23) 2. WHICH is the surest way never to doubt of the existence of God?

A. Keep your soul in such a state, as always to wish there was a God, and you never will doubt but there is one*. Such is the advice of one J. J. Rousseau. whom no body will suspect of being overprejudiced in favour of Religion. Adore the Eternal, says he elsewhere, and all the phantoms of Atheism will vanish. The virtuous man, from his own feelings, believes a God, and then has nothing to fear from Atheism. Though the monster In sensu fit tibi cogitatus Dei. Eccl. 7 should succeed in staggering his reason, his heart would still protest against it. Overpowered by the weight of fifty sophisms, he would still say: *I feel there is a God.*

* It is almost the translation of this passage of St. Augustine: *Nemo Deum negat, nisi cui expedit Deum non esse.*

CHAPTER II.

THE ATHEISTIC SYSTEM.

ARTICLE I.

Credulity of the Atheist.

(24) Q. DOES not the System of the Atheist shelter him from difficulties that occur in the profession of God's existence, and of a Providence ruling the world?

Voltaire.

A. A man who cannot be suspected in this matter, says that, for a few difficulties that are easily accounted for in the supposition of a God, there is nothing but absurdity to be met with in the contrary opinion. Another has said very ingeniously, that the Atheist's faith requires a much greater effort of belief, than that of Christians, and that his Creed may be reduced to three words: *Credo omnia incredibilia*, I believe all that is incredible.

(25) Q. Which are the articles of the Atheist's Creed?

A. In a leading opinion, where all is absurd, it is not possible to enumerate all the mysterious extravagancies it supposes, or contains, or brings

brings after it. Here are some of them : Instead of admitting a supreme intellectual Being, that made the universe, that preserves and governs it, the Atheist says : I believe a Matter eternal and increated, indifferent by its nature to rest and motion, which, without any first mover, gives motion to itself ; a Matter devoid of reason, which, by the blind and fortuitous jumbling of its parts, produces the Earth, the Sea, the Heavens, and all that is contained in them, compleats a Master-piece of Wisdom, forms a whole, in which we see with admiration, wonders of proportion, in which nothing flags or fails, neither the productions of the earth, nor the vicissitudes of the seasons, nor the regular course of the stars. A machine of immense extent, composed of several millions of wheels, all different from one another, that mutually move and are moved by each other, with the most perfect harmony and the strictest regularity ; producing punctually and without confusion, their peculiar effects without the assistance of any directing hand. I acknowledge the best selected means, but without any object or intention ; the wisest designs, and no wisdom forming them ; the most perfect order, the most enchanting beauties, the nicest and most ingenious combinations, produced by mere chance ;
a motion

a motion perfectly regular, and no mover; a chance which so forms the human body, that it could not have been formed with more art or more design; eyes that were not made for seeing; ears not contrived for hearing, but that we happen to make use of, because we find them in our heads*. We would never have done, were we to pursue the enumeration of all the mysteries of incredulity. Bayle, who so often employed his abilities in support of bad causes, proves to a demonstration, that the most consistent Atheism is but a heap of extravagancies and ridiculous contradictions. (See *Diction. Hist. & Crit.* art. *Spinoza*.) Voltaire passes the same judgment on the *System of Nature*. Bergier has not been able to collect all its contradictions in two long chapters of *Examen du Materialisme*.

Infra, art.
8. n. 70.

Infra,
n. 123.

* *Lumina ne facias oculorum clara, creatâ
Perspicere ut possimus; et, ut proferre viâ
Proceros passus, ideo vestigia posse
Surarum ac digitum pedibus fundata plicari.
Brachia tum porro validis, exapta lacertis
Esse, manusque datas utrâque ex parte ministras,
Ut facere ad vitam possimus quæ foret usus.
Cætera de genere hoc inter quæcunque prætantur
Omnia perversâ præpostera sunt ratione.
Nil ideo natum est in nostro corpore, ut uti
Possimus; sed quod natum est, id procreat usum.*

Lucret.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE II.

Eternal Matter.

SECTION I.

(26) Q. IN the enumeration you have made, there are many things that look more like deliriums than mysteries. But might not one suppose creation to be as great a mystery, as Eternal Matter?

A. Once I acknowledge an omnipotent Being, creation is no mystery. An omnipotent Being, that could not create, would be a very great mystery, or rather a very great absurdity. It rests with the Atheists to shew that an omnipotent Being implies a contradiction.

(27) Q. Have not all the ancient Philosophers to a man, considered Creation as impossible?

A. I. Though they had, they could not have thereby shown a contradiction in these words: *An atom, that existed not, exists.* Creation was, for many of the heathen Philosophers, one of those things, that were neither denied nor affirmed, because its nature and possibility were not made a matter of enquiry, just as there was no talk among them about the earth's being

being in motion and the sun at rest. The axiom *ex nihilo nihil fit*, which, when meant of human works, is strictly true, had caught the understanding as well as the eyes, and no further enquiry was made. But revelation, improving the notions that reason had left imperfect, by a surer and stronger light, discovered the intimate connexion that subsists between the power of creating and the nature of God, that a self-existing, eternal, independent Matter was an absurdity*. These notions have remained hitherto sheltered from the attacks of Atheists. If the doctrine of Creation, such as we believe it, had been proposed to the Philosophers of Heathen times, they would certainly have adopted it, in preference to the absurd hypotheses, to which they gave birth.

2 The wisest of the ancient Philosophers, and the most consistent in their notion of the Deity, have denied, point blank, the eternity of Matter, and acknowledged a God Creator of all things, such as we conceive him at present. Of this number were Pythagoras, Plato, Thales, Philolaus, Iamblicus, &c. Proclus (*Instit. Theol.* cap. 72.) says that, *Matter, which is the subject of all things, is itself produced by the Author of all things.* He attributes the same opinion to Plato, who is himself very explicit on the subject; and, in

* *Fide intelligimus aptata esse secula verbo Dei, ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent.* Heb. xi.

in his comment upon Timæus, Proclus calls God, *the ineffable author of Matter*. Hierocles, a celebrated Platonic, finds fault with some Philosophers for not believing God sufficiently powerful to create the world without the concurrence of increated, and consequently independent matter. He observes that "Order is sufficiently found in a naturally self-existing Being, and that, to promote what was not of his making, would have been in God a superfluous exertion." "Would it not be against Nature, says he, to attempt any addition to an increated and self-existing Being?" This judicious reasoning deserves a place among the very best things that have been said against the eternity of Matter*.

(28) Q. Is it very clear that the notion of God rightly conceived, militates against the eternity of Matter?

A. If Matter be eternal, it is therefore self-existing; God can no more annihilate it, than he

* Bayle, notwithstanding his scepticism, and the general inconsistency of his ideas, is decided for the truth of this argument of Hierocles. "The better to know the importance of the doctrine of creation, one must take a view of the inextricable difficulties to which they expose themselves who deny it.... They have been obliged to acknowledge the self-existence of matter, and yet to submit it to the authority of a substance full of imperfections; which overthrows a very evident notion, to wit, that what, to exist for ever, is independent of every thing, must be infinite in perfections; for what could set bounds to the perfections and attributes of such a being?" *Dict. Crit. art. Epicure.*

he could create it. A grain of sand would defy his omnipotence; and the existence of Matter, and of all the parts of Matter, would be as necessary as God's own existence. What is God? If we collect all that the clearest reason, the most enlightened Philosophy, the most sublime Revelation teaches us concerning him, we will find that all that can be said and conceived of his greatness, is expressed by this one word: *Infinite*. God is the infinite Being, necessarily infinite, infinite in all his perfections. There is certainly neither Deist nor Philosopher that will refuse to admit this idea we give of God. Now, if God is infinite, his existence, his manner of existing, his knowledge, his will, his power is infinite. If his power is infinite, it therefore can give existence, it can create; it can cause, that which existed not, to exist. There is the strongest proof that this power is really infinite. If infinite, it must have an absolute authority over all that exists, so that nothing does or can exist but by his will. To deny God the power of creating, is denying the infinity of his power; and to deny the infinity of his power is denying his existence. An infinite God, a creating God, there is the most sublime idea we can possibly conceive of the supreme Being, the highest pitch to which our reason can soar in the knowledge of him. What a difference

a difference between a God, the arranger only of pre-existing matter, and a creator God, who commands matter to exist. The idea then of eternal Matter is incompatible with the idea we have of God.

SECTION II.

(29.) 2. NOTWITHSTANDING the demonstration arising from the idea of God against the eternity of matter, is not creation still a thing incomprehensible?

A. The not conceiving how a thing can be is no sufficient reason to reject it. It would be requisite besides to shew it is repugnant, and contains a contradiction. Now we challenge all the Philosophers to prove that the idea of creation repugns and contains a contradiction. We challenge them to show it is impossible for God to be a creator*.

Those

* David Hume shews that the axiom, *from nothing nothing comes*, cannot be demonstrated. He thinks the production of ideas is a real creation. The notion of a creating power, is familiar to all nations. All have attributed to their Gods, to their spirits, to their fairies, to their magicians, the power of producing beings with a single word, with the stroke of a wand, by a simple act of the will. Bayle has proved very well, that of all hypotheses, that of the creation was liable to the fewest difficulties: that to conceive a Providence, we must necessarily pre-suppose it, that the Socinians and Atheists, by refusing to admit it, fall into impious absurdities, vastly more inconceivable than creation itself: he maintains that the production of a quality distinct from its subject, is not different from creation. *Nouv. de la Repub. des Lettres*. Dec. 1685.—*Diction. Crit. art. Anaxagoras, Epicurus, Ovid, Xenophanes, &c.*

7th and
12th Essay.

Those who admit the idea of God, and reject the creation, because they cannot conceive how a thing can issue from nothing and begin to exist, do not perceive the inconsistency of their own principles. Do they find it easier to conceive a thousand other things, which they cannot help admitting? Do they find it easier, as it has been often asked them, to conceive matter existing eternally, and eternally inert, and waiting a whole eternity for God to give it activity? Do they find it easier to conceive that surprising, constant, uniform fecundity, which is given to matter, by means of the seeds, without which, matter must have been destitute of power to produce any thing? Is the formation and fruitfulness of these seeds, ever issuing from the matrix of each other, and yielding that almost infinite variety of beings and productions, a thing easier to conceive than the creation? Is the creation of spirits, of spiritual substances, more easily conceived than that of matter? For, they must either say there are no spiritual substances; or that they are created, or that they are eternal like God. If they say there are no spiritual substances, they rank themselves with those that the ancients called swine: *Epicuri de grege Porcus*. Such a thought can occur only in moments of the grossest and foulest pleasure, and the most reprobated by reason; if they say they are eternal and uncreated,

created, that would be saying they are independent of God ; for what power could he have over substances eternal as himself, and who, to exist, to think, to will and to reason, would stand in no need of him ; if they say they are created, they reduce themselves to the necessity of confessing the same, with regard to matter.



ARTICLE III.

Eternal Motion.

(30) Q. GRANTING the Atheists eternal matter, would their system be much the better of it in its proofs ?

A. It would be still without any support. This matter requires motion ; and the Atheists know of no cause that can give it motion.

(31) Q. Why should not matter be in motion from all eternity ?

A. The inertness of matter is a quality acknowledged by the greatest Philosophers, both ancient and modern. Among the ancients, nobody has reasoned better upon the subject than Platô, nor drawn juster and more rational consequences.

sequences. As to the moderns, it is observed that, among those of the greatest eminence, there is not one that does not suppose, as a principle, the inertness of matter, and its intrinsic incapacity of giving itself motion. Copernic, Kepler, Descartes, Gassendi, Newton, Malebranche, Euler, all are unanimous on this head; and if to the authority of such names, we add the support of argument, surely there will be no means of withstanding the evidence of the principle.

(32) Q. Did not Democritus hold that the motion of matter was eternal?

A. Democritus indeed, the master of Epicurus, did not think with Plato and the other Philosophers*. He supposes matter in motion; but it is also a truth, that Democritus fancies rather than reasons, and that he has nothing to offer in answer to the really unanswerable difficulties that are made him against the intrinsic motion of matter. It is equally true that the people of Abdera, in pity to him, had the charity to send him physicians to cure his disordered brain.

(33) Q. How do you prove the inertness of matter, and its absolute incapacity of giving itself motion?

A. By

* *Illis mentis deliria nemo præter unum Leucippum somniavit, a quo Democritus eruditus, hæreditatem stultitiæ reliquit Epicurus.* Lact. Instit. Lib. 3. cap. 17.

A. By a combination of reflections, set forth with much clearness and precision, by one of the most famous of our modern Philosophers. "I see matter," says he, "sometimes in motion, sometimes at rest; from whence I conclude, that rest and motion are not essential to it. But motion being an action, must be the effect of a cause, the absence whereof is rest. When nothing acts upon matter, it moves not; and, for the very reason that it is indifferent to rest and to motion, its natural state is to be at rest." Then, after distinguishing passive and communicated motion from that which is voluntary and spontaneous, he has those remarkable words:

J. J. Rousseau. *Emile*.
vol. 3. p. 43.
Edit. 1762.

"To conceive matter as producing motion, is clearly conceiving an effect without a cause, that is, conceiving nothing at all:" and adds, "Is it not plain that, if motion were essential to matter, it would be inseparable from it, always in the same degree, always the same in each portion of matter, it would be incommunicable, could neither increase nor diminish, nor could it even be conceived at rest."

"When people tell me that motion is not essential, but necessary to matter, that is only imposing on me with words, which it would be easier to refute, if they had but a little more meaning in them. For the motion of matter

“ matter either comes from itself, and then is
 “ essential to it; or, if it comes from a foreign
 “ cause, it is necessary to matter, only as far as
 “ the moving cause continues to act upon it;
 “ and here we again meet the first difficulty.

“ General, abstract ideas are a source of the
 “ greatest errors of mankind. Never did the
 “ jargon of metaphysics discover a single truth,
 “ and it has filled Philosophy with absurdities,
 “ that we are ashamed of, so soon as we have
 “ stripped them of their pedantic words. Tell
 “ me, my dear, when you hear of a blind
 “ force diffused through all nature, whether
 “ that conveys any idea into your mind?
 “ People think that by these vague words:
 “ *universal force, necessary motion*, they say some-
 “ thing; and, in reality, they say nothing at
 “ all.

“ The idea of motion is nothing but the idea
 “ of a translation from one place to another;
 “ there is no motion without some direction;
 “ an individual being cannot move every way
 “ at once. Which way then does matter ne-
 “ cessarily move?

“ Has all matter in a lump one uniform mo-
 “ tion, or has each atom in particular a motion
 “ of its own? In the first case, the whole
 “ universe must form one solid indivisible mass;
 “ in the second, it must form a scattered, inco-
 “ herent

“herent fluid, without a possibility for any two
“atoms ever to unite.

“In what direction will this common mo-
“tion of all matter be made? Will it be in
“a straight line? Will it be up, or down?
“to the right, or to the left? If each particle
“of matter has its peculiar direction, what will
“be the causes of all these directions and dif-
“ferences? If each atom or particle of matter
“did no more than turn on its own centre,
“nothing would ever leave its place, nor
“would there be any motion communicated;
“nay, it would be necessary for this circular
“motion to be determined one way or other.
“To give motion to matter by abstraction, is
“saying words without meaning; and to give
“it a determinate motion, is supposing a cause
“that determines it.”

(34) Q. Since matter is possessed of quali-
ties not known to us, would it not be rash of
us to refuse it motion? Can we be too cau-
tious in pronouncing upon things, to the na-
ture of which we are strangers?

A. There is no rashness in refusing matter
a quality that implies a contradiction, as we
have just now proved. One must be cautious,
without doubt: but one must also be steady
and consistent. We know matter only by its
sensible qualities, that is to say, by its exten-
sion, its divisibility, its inertness, in short, by
the

the impression it makes on our senses: we know it was created for our purposes and our service: that much knowledge of it is enough for us; and far from leading to the idea of essential motion, it agrees perfectly with the proofs that convince us of the absurdity of such a motion. We may add that it is contradicted by the visible state of the world, by the aspect of all the productions of nature.

Lett. Helv.
T. 2.

“ Give,” says a man who has handled this subject remarkably well, “ Give matter the power
“ of breaking its rest, and the order of the universe is overturned: that immoveable rock
“ will immediately enter into action, and freely
“ stalk over our fields, since it has strength
“ enough to do so: that bulwark, that defends
“ our palaces, will grow tired of the place it
“ occupies these so many centuries: that treasure buried by the miser’s hand, will rise
“ from its grave: that cane, which slipped
“ from me, will stand up of itself, and come
“ into my hand: give matter the power,
“ causes remaining the same, to diversify the
“ effects, that river will no longer follow
“ the declivity of its channel, and the tumbling stone will suspend its fall: that star,
“ performing its revolution, will follow the
“ order of the signs, or deviate, as it chuses;
“ and the Astronomer puzzled at its aberrations, will vainly attempt to fix its period.
“ That

" That power you cannot give to brute matter,
 " try and give it to that vegetating body; the
 " palm will rise from an acorn of the oak:
 " the poplar leaves will cover the fruit of the
 " orange tree, and our harvests will disappoint
 " the husbandman with crops he did not sow.
 " Give then to matter the power either of
 " itself to break from its rest, or that of not
 " complying with the law that confines it, and
 " the order of nature will be totally sub-
 " verted. Matter therefore is essentially in a
 " state of dead rest, essentially passive, inert,
 " and in action a mere slave."

The question concerning the spirituality of
 the soul, will bring us back to those same ar-^{Infra, l. 2,}
 guments, and give us room for a more ample^{chap. 1.}
 discussion.^{137.}

ARTICLE III.

The Atoms.

SECTION I.

(35) 2. **THOUGH** matter were allowed motion independent of God, could one from thence infer the formation of the world?

VOL. I.

D

A. It

A. It would be still requisite to shew, how mere fortuitous motion could produce such order, such beauty, such utility in the various beings that compose the universe, in the relation and result of all its parts. Motion is not the only thing in the world. There are inimitable beauties, the happiest combinations, a constant, regular, invariable process. To produce and keep up all that, there is something requisite besides blind unintelligent motion. Such a motion, far from producing any thing, must necessarily prevent all manner of production.

(36) 2. Might not the creative power of the atoms be established by means of chances, by the theory of lots, of compensation by compensations, by experiments repeated millions and millions of times, &c.? Two Academicians, they say, have succeeded wonderfully in this method of proving.

Premontval
Vues Philo-
soph. Tom.
 2. p. 329.
 Diderot.
 Pensées.
 Phil. n.
 21.

A. It is scarce credible, that any one could sit down seriously to write such nonsense. Their arguments, which, in many respects, are nothing but an unintelligible jargon, amount to this: the beautiful poem of the *Æneid*, may be made by an infinity of infinities of casts of typographical letters; and therefore the world may be also made by the fortuitous concurrence

concourse of atoms, jostling and jumbling together from all eternity. Thanks to the light of Philosophy: it will be no longer a difficult matter to guess the authors of some beautiful works of Literature, of Sculpture, of Architecture, transmitted to us from ancient times. It will be no longer disputed, whether the two Bucephali of Mount Quirinal are really the work of Phidias and Praxiteles: the discussion might be difficult: the shortest way is to say, that matter, from all eternity, got itself cast, by whoever chose to take that trouble, into an infinite number of moulds, until satisfied at last to see itself a Bucephalus, it thought fit to remain so.

(37) Q. The arrangement of the letters, such as it is in the *Æneid*, is absolutely possible. Why then might it not be the result of fortuitous motion in an infinite number of trials?

A. 1. It is not amiss to remember what we have already said, that matter is not eternal; that motion is neither eternal, nor natural to matter; that therefore the two Academicians argue upon suppositions, that have been proved false.

2. To form the *Æneid* there must be in the first place, a language, which is no trifling affair, much less an affair of chance. J. J.

Disc. on the
inequality
of Men.

Rousséau observes, that it is not conceivable, how men could of themselves form one. In the next place there must be writing, there must be letters, which are the very masterpiece of human invention. The savages and negroes consider writing as perfect witchcraft. *The art, they say, of making paper speak, can be no other than the black art.* There must be pre-existing typographical letters, on which must have been made cuts or impressions fit to produce the *Æneid*, rather than the *Iliad*, or any Arabick or Chinese Poem. Now, do not characters, so cast and so engraved, suppose an understanding that presided at their formation, which, in forming them, had some end in view, and such an end rather than such another? In short, these typographical letters must have been gathered and united in one and the same place: and in that place there must have been an acting hand, which uniting these typographical letters hap-hazard, must nevertheless have intended putting them together with their faces properly turned; in that place there must have been cases, presses and printer's ink, a steady floor, and rows of supporters, to keep those types before and after their fortuitous meeting, &c. It is therefore evident that the vain speculation of the two

Philosophers

Philosophers consists in absurdly overturning the order of things, and supposing laws of chance, which are and can be nothing but appendages of the actual pre-existing order of nature.

3. The supposition of trials reiterated from all eternity implies an evident contradiction; to wit, an infinite number, to which one unit can not be added, nor one unit taken off; for what is infinite must be ever so, and can neither increase nor diminish. Now, in the present case, the atoms might have made a few trials more, or a few less.

4. Casting from all eternity as many printing types as would be requisite to form the *Æneid*, there would be millions and millions of casts, that would present nothing but chaos and confusion; in which nothing would have been seen, but perhaps a few syllables, a few lame words, without any coherence. In like manner giving the fortuitous concourse of the atoms for the efficient cause of the world, there would be millions and millions of combinations, that would exhibit nothing but noses without faces, eyes without heads, beings half animals, half stocks or stones, pieces scattered up and down the universe, without order and without forming any one whole.

5. Granting

5. Granting that the atoms did by dint of trials produce the world, why did they stop there? Why did they not proceed to the formation of another, and reprobate this, as well as those they had formed before?—To say that this world is framed according to the rules of *Æquilibrium*, is engaging in the first place to explain why the atoms did not from the beginning look for a situation so natural, and so essential to matter; it is fundamentally destroying the Epicurean supposition; for where there are rules and necessities, there can be no fortuitous concurrence.

6. Though there is no geometrical nor metaphysical demonstration that the *Æneid* can not be the result of a fortuitous motion, no man in his senses will ever be persuaded that such a thing happened, or can happen during an eternity. If an Atheist were told, that stones thrown together without any design had formed a wondrous fine building: that the noblest pieces of painting had no occasion for a superintendent, to give them that gracefulness, that majesty, that sensibility, that life and action they exhibit: that the finest pictures, the variety of attitudes, the impassioned looks, the distribution of lights, the beauties of perspective, are only the work of colours thrown together at random: that the strings
of

of the most harmonious instrument took their positions of themselves, that fortuitous touches on them produce the most delightful concerts, &c.*: the man that heard such paradoxes related, would look upon them as the sayings of one out of his senses; although the combinations by which those master-pieces are formed, be metaphysically possible in a fortuitous motion. Now these sayings are precisely what the Epicureans say. For, granting them all the two Academicians suppose, it is still as unlikely that the world will result from millions and millions of atoms, as, that dust, continually tossed and tumbled in a hoghead, will produce trees, animals, pictures, &c. This is the opinion, and the very proper simile made use of by one, who has been but too favourable to the deliriums of Philosophy.

Thoughts
of Volt. p.
9. Edit. of
1765.

7. Though it were true, that a beautiful poem, a fine picture, are the works of chance, it would not follow that the formation of the world is so too. A book is only a compound of

* And yet this simile does not express the whole absurdity of the Epicurean system, unless we suppose the concert continued without interruption, and sounds perpetually reproduced, still agreeable to the severe laws of harmony, still varied and regulated upon a general plan of music; just like the ever even process of this active universe, and the operations still arising from the fruitful and unchangeable womb of nature.

of letters ; and a picture, of colours ; but the world contains beings that think, and thought is not a compound of atoms. “ Combinations and chances will never produce any thing but of the same nature. A
 Emile, t. 3 “ Chymist combining mixtures in his crucible,
 P. 56. “ will never be able to make them feel or
 “ think.”

SECTION II.

(38) Q. DO we not see Nature, by a blind motion, producing figures admired for their regularity, well formed characters, representations of men, animals, plants, &c.

A. 1. When these figures are really the work of chance, they are never without some flaw, and represent but very imperfectly some real beings. This is a remark made by one who has much employed himself in looking and accounting for stones marked with different impressions*.

2. Most of those figures that are considered as so many *lusus Naturæ*, are the works of some mould that left its features impressed, and

* *Est et aliud bujus rei non leve argumentum fortuito et casuali fluxu constituta esse similia phasmata ; quod vix nulla ex his, quæ animalis figuram mentiuntur, forma perfecta sit, sed semper aliquid ad integram figuram constituendam requisitum deesse compariatur.* Kirch. Mund. Subt. 2. parte. p. 37. edit. 1664.

and exerted the activity of its salts, upon a piece of matter soft at first, and afterwards hardened by the air, the waters, the sun, or the subterraneous fires*.

3. Those who have called in this observation to the assistance of the Epicureans, did not think of distinguishing : 1. between a moment's regularity and the uniform continuance of ages : 2. between one regular individual, and all kinds of beings ; the order, the constitution, and preservation of the universe : 3. between the surface or outside of a thing, and its nature, its inward disposition, the wonderful mixture of the materials that compose it, between a mask in shott and an human head. Moulds impress and fashion only the outside, whereas the organs are textures of innumerable threads, that allow the moulds neither ingress to make their impression, nor egress after making it. Chance apes art sometimes. We see, in groupes of fortuitous lines, something like the plans of cities, with houses, &c. Will it be inferred that chance has built cities ?

4. Even the most admired among the *lusus Nature*, are only a consequence, a misformed,

D 5

misplaced

* See Ibid. *Modus secundus*, p. 38. *Modus tertius*, p. 39. *Modus quartus*, p. 41. &c.

misplaced result of the rules established by the Creator, the effect of some feminal spirit, of some combination of laws, that mistook their course, and were balked of their object.

(39) Q. What are we to think of the mysteries, that some celebrated Naturalists have discovered in the configuration of the parts of Snow, Hoar-frost and Ice?

A. Nearly the same as what we have just now said of stones and other things seemingly formed with design. The plants formed of hoar-frost adhering to the windows of houses, which Scheuchzer observed at Zurich, and got engraved in the *Physica Sacra*, t. 5. tab. 530. fig. A. B. are nothing but vapours and smoke congealed on the window glass in the order and disposition in which they adhered. Every body knows that all exhalations divide into branches, multiplied in the direct ratio of their distances from the *focus*, which would give them the figure of trees, if subsisting and visible in all their divisions. The small figures represented in the same plate seem harder to account for. The Author thinks it would be useless to attempt it. Erasmus Bartholinus, in a book written on the subject, is of the same opinion. It may perhaps be sufficient to recollect what we have said in the foregoing
answer

answer, n. 4. to dispel all the darkness of this pretended mystery*. But, after the differences we have observed between those kinds of regularities and those of God's works, it is useless to dwell any longer on the subject.

(40) Q. Is not the irregularity we observe in the great works of Nature, in the distribution of the stars, placed in the firmament without symmetry or order, in the determination of the limits of the Continent and the Seas, capable of making one suspect the operation of chance?

A. 1. To reason upon the distribution of the stars, it would be necessary to know both

* Here is what I find in a manuscript now before me. *Notare forsan juvat, 1. Ad plantas multigenas, maxime qualiter in semine ordiantur, hanc figuram pene omnes alludere. 2. Spermaticis spiritibus plantarum aliarumque etiam rerum aera esse plenum. (Mund. Subt. p. 2. lib. 22. c. 7.) 3. Illos spiritus eo ordine, quo vel in semine, vel alia re clauduntur, atque ex illa profecti sunt, se collocare et figere, ut in Palingenesi constat; et explicatur parallelismo cum foco radiorum. (Mund. Subt. p. 2. lib. 12. c. 5. Experim. 1.) 4. Spiritus illos plasticam vim in omnem materiam mollem sibi subjectam et commixtam exercere, ut constat in petrificationibus (Mund. Subt. p. 2. l. 8. Modus tertius.) Et maxime in plantis anthropomorphis (Ibid. lib. 12. c. 9.) 5. In locis potissimum, ubi vapores multi et varii; ut in latrinis, ejusmodi figuras spectari, &c. &c.* To these particular reflections we may add a general one, which gives them support and a well grounded likeness to truth. It is, that all exhalations, issuing from organised bodies, have naturally a regular disposition. It is only foreign motion, particularly that of the air, that disturbs and confounds them.—Perhaps too the laws of crystallization may influence the regularity of some of those figures. One may consult the *Crystallography* of M. Romé de l'Isle, vol. 4. in 8vo.

both the general and particular relation they bear to the great machine of the world; and that is a knowledge, which no man in his senses will ever flatter himself with the hopes of attaining. 2. Even those irregularities discover the views of an intelligent cause. If the stars were all arranged on the same plan, if they were not scattered in a thousand different figures, it would be impossible to class them: they would be no longer useful in determining the course of the Sun and Planets: Astronomy and Geography would be lost, &c*. The diversified manner in which the Sea embraces and divides the Continent, is the very life of Navigation, it is the wealth of Nations, and one of the main links of the chain that binds society together. The central parts of Asia, Africa and America lie waste and uncultivated; while Europe, intersected and divided by the Sea, is generally in a flourishing state, &c. Symmetrical arrangement may be a merit in small things: but it often lessens the value of great

* Derham holds that the stars are arranged in the greatest order; but that we are at too great a distance, to see their position such as it really is: that it is with them, as with an army drawn up in the finest order, but which at too great a distance, appears confused and disorderly. *Theol. Astron.* p. 49. If that be the case, we must only admire the more the contrivance of Providence, which from a seeming irregularity, makes us derive advantages, that real regularity could not procure us.

*Was castro-
rum in excelsis.
Ecclus.*
43~

great ones, takes from the magnificence of the execution, and defeats the intention of the Architect.—For these and the like objections we refer the reader to the Article of *Final Causes*. Infra Art. 8. n. 71.

SECTION III.

(41) Q. If chance had really produced the world, what should we think of so wonderful and so powerful an agent?

A. The author of the *Jewish Letters* says, that the Atheists acknowledging chance for the author and preserver of the world, cannot refuse to pay it worship; and, though the assertion may appear to be rather of the jocular, than of the serious kind, it serves very well to shew the absurdity of the atom system. *Were I, says he, persuaded of Epicurus's system, viewing every day the course of the sun, seeing him appear on our horizon, and then with giant strides hastening to the Antipodes, I would cry out: Hail! eternal chance; hail! incomprehensible derangement*; Hail!*

* "The sun has constantly repeated his annual course near six thousand times since the creation of the world, and his daily course near two millions of times; and, what adds greatly to the wonder, the sun moves in a fluid extremely thin and subtil, in which he finds nothing to direct his course.

*The Author
of Nature,
Paris, 1783.*

hail! admirable confusion; who keepest up such wonderful order and arrangement! Vouchsafe to accept, at my hands, of the homage which other mortals blindly pay to the God of goodness, of power and of wisdom.

ARTICLE

" course. His motion is circular, and consequently the most
 " unnatural, and most in need of a coercive force to bend it
 " at every step. Those atoms that we see continually dancing in a sun-beam never describe one circle. How then
 " could an immense orb, moving in a fluid much thinner
 " than our air, describe by mere chance, and without interruption, near two million of them with so much regularity.
 " His retrograde motion is exactly in the same proportion
 " with the progressive, though he finds nothing at the tropic
 " to prevent his going on. In the new system, the motion of
 " the earth round the sun is elliptic, which is neither more
 " natural, nor in less need of coercion than the circular.
 " The moon has renewed upwards of seventy-two thousand
 " times the revolution peculiar to her. The course of these
 " two, as well as that of the other celestial bodies, is so
 " exactly the same, that their conjunctions, oppositions, and
 " eclipses may, with the greatest precision, be foretold many
 " centuries before they happen; nor is there any delay in
 " their progress, nor deviation from their course, that can
 " cause the smallest apprehension of their not answering the
 " predictions made so long before the events. This proof
 " will receive a new degree of evidence, if it be observed
 " that this regular and continued revolution, is always attended with gradual differences, ever constant, and ever
 " uniform. The sun has already repeated his course near
 " two millions of times, with those regular variations that
 " cause the regular irregularity of the days. The moon has
 " ever experienced the same increases and decreases of light."

This is the very argument that David sets forth with so much energy, and sublime Laconism, so becoming the spirit of God that inspired him: *In æternum, Domine, verbum tuum permanet in celo. In generationem et generationem veritas tua. Fundasti terram et permanet. Ordinatione tuâ perseverat Dies. Psalm. 118.*

ARTICLE V.

Fecundity of Matter.

SECTION I.

(42) Q. INSTEAD of recurring to a collision of atoms to produce the world, is it not more simple to endue matter with fecundity, and to make it the mother of all things?

A. How much more simple that would be, I know not; but I know it would not be more consistent with reason. What is this fecundity of matter? It is not easy to make sense of the word. Matter essentially inert and passive, has neither motion nor action, nor life nor fecundity. All it can do is to serve and to obey.

(43) Q. Is it not a received truth that nature is endued with a fecundity not to be exhausted: that she is the origin and parent of all beings?

A. Let us agree on the meaning of the words. *Nature is the system of laws established by the Creator for the existence of things, and the succession of beings.* This is M. Buffon's wise definition: and, this definition once admitted,

mitted, nature, without doubt is fecund. But Nature is not matter, or, if you will, it is matter moved, directed, employed according to the dictates of the wisdom and power of the Creator. "Nature," continues Buffon, "is not a thing; for that thing would be every thing: it is not a being; for that being would be God. But it may be considered as an immense living power, that embraces all things, animates all; and, subservient to the first being, began to act only by his orders, and still continues only with his concurrence or consent. This power is of the divine power that portion which appears. As minister of his irrevocable orders, as depositary of his immutable decrees, Nature never deviates from the rules he has prescribed, never changes any thing in the plans he has laid down, and, in all her works, exhibits the stamp of him who is eternal, &c. &c.

SECTION I.

(44) 2. IF it be true that nature never alters the Creator's plan, and is nothing else but the system of his laws, how comes she to produce monsters of all kinds?

A. There

A. There can be no violation of rules, where no rules exist; no monsters, where there are no determinate figures traced upon a general plan. I do not enquire why God permits those temporary deviations in the agents,* who execute his decrees; nor whether those very deviations do not enhance the merit of an operation, regular and perfect in all its parts, coeval with the duration of accumulated ages, and including in its extent, every species of being that exists; nor whether the monsters, those at least of the human race, are not the consequence of some foreign disturbance, subsequent to creation; nor whether the care and attention of man might not prevent most of the monstrosities of his species*; nor, whether a system, in which monstrosities were impossible, would not overturn the present state of nature, and all the laws established for the reproduction of beings, and the preservation of the species:

* See Derham's *Theologia Physica*.—Des Essart's *Treatise on the corporal education of children*, p. 18, &c. Muis, *Investigatio Fabricæ quæ in partibus musculos habentibus exstat*. Prefat. On this, one may read S. Augustin. lib. 12. De civit. Dei. cap. 2. 5. *Strangelias de Monstris*. Schott. Phys. Cur. t. 1. p. 177. &c. Here is what a wise and profound Philosopher says on the subject. *Natura autem mutabilis, Deo tamen obtemperans, etsi juxta inferioris mundi seriem a solita lege deflectat, rapitur tamen divini spiritus vi, jam seipsa prope divinius facta; quippe quæ lege antiquiori et sanctiori Dei porrigens manum, toti se subicit totam, et vel deerrando ad destinatum a Deo collimat finem*. Corn. Gemma. *Cosmo-Critic*. lib. 1. cap. 6.

species: it is enough that monsters, suppose the existence of a mould, formed with design, and given as a model to all the productions of nature, according to the exigence of each species, and the support of the present state of the world*. Even in the monsters, the traces of the general plan, and of the archetype, are observable. They are, says a celebrated naturalist, pieces of admirable architecture, though detached from the body of the fabric, and without any relation to the whole†.

(45) 2.

* "The Monsters," says the author of *The studies of Nature* "that are preserved in bottles of spirits of wine, such as pigs with elephant's trunks; coupled, and two-headed children, that are shown in our cabinets with a kind of mysterious philosophy, prove not so much the work of Nature, as its interruption. None of those beings could come to a perfect expansion; and far from proving that the wise Being which produced them went astray, they witness, on the contrary, the immutability of his wisdom, since he rejected them from his plan by refusing them life." He had already observed that living monsters were no where to be seen. "I often heard living monsters proclaimed at our fairs, but could never get to see any of them, though I took pains enough for it." He shews by examples, that what was given out for monsters, did not come under that denomination.

† *Exhibet se ubique harmonia inordinata, confusio ordinatissima, natura semper variata, semper eadem; architecturae ordo decompositus, sed artificii infiniti.* Scheuchzer, *Phyf. Sac.* t. 5. p. 1040. M. Buffon, calls this work *puerile*, and *made for the amusement of children*. This censure is by far too severe, not to create a suspicion of some professional jealousy. M. Giraud Soulavie, a disciple and admirer of M. Buffon, has done Scheuchzer more justice. *His descriptions, says he, which are true copies of nature, will last as long as nature herself.*

(45) 2. Do giants, from three to four hundred feet tall, find room within the Creator's plan.

A. If any individuals of that stature had existed, they would be deviations, and would come under the remark I have just now made. But all those giants of 400, 140, and 120 feet, are only foolish exaggerations. Of this one may be convinced by the observations of a man, who, perhaps, was but too fond of such popular traditions*. The Scripture tells us, that Goliath was six cubits high and one palm, which, by the best computation, makes nine feet three inches. Og might be nearly the same†. Those, I suppose, are the most famous and the most averred of all the giants. Teudoboccus is an imaginary monster‡. The bones that are shewn, as remains of giants, are those of whales, elephants, rhinoceroses, camels,

* *Mundus Subt.* part. 2. p. 58. Schott may be also consulted, *Phys. Cur.* t. 1. p. 512. *Diction. Encyclop.* art. *Géant*. Calmet. *Dissert. on Giants.* Comment. tom. 1. p. xxii. edit. 1734.

† His bed was thirteen feet and one-half long. I suppose it was wide in proportion; kings do not stint themselves. Those beds were sometimes a deceitful measure, as we shall see just now, by the story of Alexander.

‡ His bones were found to be elephants' bones. All that has been told of the sepulchre and epitaph of this Theudoboccus, or Theudolochus, is but an imposture, an Antiquarian's dream. See *Diction. d'Hist. Nat.* of Valmont. art. *Geant*, edit. 1769. The *Gigantomachia* of Riolan, in 1713, &c. Habicot and D. Calmet have given their support to this tale.

camels, &c. Turner showed in London, the pretended bone of a giant, which was that of a Brasilian bull. Carvers have often counterfeited these bones. In 1678, a tooth was carved in Vienna, of the giant Og, and said to have been sent from Constantinople. But since the publication of Hans Sloane's Gigantology, no mountebank has ventured to appear with the spoils of giants, which, so early as the days of Augustus, were employed to impose upon the Romans, as Suetonius confesses, speaking of the skeletons the Emperor kept in his cabinet. The bones, which in some cities are carried about in procession, are meant as emblems of floods, plagues, or wars, of which the remembrance is preserved by these monstrous symbols. The ancients had the foolish ambition to aim at passing for giants, and left monuments after them to deceive posterity. Alexander got the beds of his soldiers lengthened, in order to create in after ages, a belief they were giants. If nature produced formerly, such frightful colossuses, why does she produce no more of them? Was Sicily another climate, when it was inhabited by men from three to four hundred feet tall*? In vain does Lucretius ad-

Quint. Cur-
tius, lib. ix.
cap. 3.

De Nat.
Rerum.
lib. ii.

vance

* Si enim hi in Sicilia nati et educati fuerant, cur hodie eosdem non producit? Neque sufficit influxum causam dicere, cum idem hodie, quod olim clima, idem siderum aspectus sit; cum ho-

die

vance that the fecundity of the earth is exhausted: the remaining incontestable monuments of men, who lived three thousand years before us, depose against that fancy of the Epicurean Poet. Are the mummies of Egypt, gigantic bodies? If nature had gone on decreasing since that time, she would produce nothing now, but three-inch pygmies. Reconcile with that curious reasoning, the pygmy nations, that are said to have existed about the same period. Don Calmet says this idea of Lucretius is very fit to confute what he says of the giants. The persuasion that men were formerly of a large size *, proceeds from the general disposition we are in, to believe past times far superior to the present. To conclude: it is certain there have been giants; but it is equally certain there never was a whole nation composed of giants, and still more certain, that no giant ever reached the exorbitant size, that Boccacio and other romance writers give them.

(46) 2. Is it so very certain that there exists no where a whole Nation of Giants?

The

die eisdem fructus, eadem animalia, quæ olim, ejusdem molis producat. Mund. Subt. p. 2. pag. 60. This reflection is very fit to confute many other fancies of the same kind.

* *Vix illud bis sex lecti cervice subirent,
Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.*

Æneid. l. 12.

The Scripture, and the accounts we have of the Magellanick land seem to prove the contrary.

A. The Gigantick species mentioned in the Scripture, is, according to the remark of Josephus, Philo, S. Cyril of Alexandria, S. Chrysostome, &c. no more than a race of men, who, to extraordinary strength and audacity, united all the vices that make the Monster*. The posterity of Seth, gradually seduced by the women, bore the stamp of their rebellion against Heaven, and the abomination of an alliance reprobated by God. It is not unlikely that among them there were many of a size and stature uncommonly great. The Giants of the Austral Lands, are at present ranked with the winged Lions, and the two headed Eagles. Two accounts of a later date than any of the tales that have been related of them, make them but six feet tall. A Patagonian girl, brought to Holland in 1599, by Sebald de Wert, did not rise to four feet after finishing her growth. In 1765, M. de Bougainville, then in Patagonia wrote: "We have made alliance
" with those infamous Patagonians, whom we
" found neither bigger than other men, nor so
" wicked."

* The word גביר, which is translated *Giant*, signifies properly a strong, violent Man.

"wicked." M. de Commerçon, that learned man, who, in his intention to present the public with a complete body of natural history, would have been happy to verify this phenomenon of nature, to explain it, to dissect the body of one of these enormous mortals, and to give a comparative anatomy of it, allows, that those Titans of the Straits of Magellan never existed but in the heated brain of some seafaring people*. This astonishing people has been for some modern observers, what perspectives are: at a distance they present a superb temple, ruins, an immense garden: but when you draw near the objects, you see nothing but sketches coarsely drawn upon a wall. In short, though there were colossal nations, all that could be inferred is, that the Creator gave the human seed a certain latitude, measured by the influence of climates, and different other causes subservient to the views of his Providence, and to the execution of his eternal decrees. But truth requires we should absolutely deny the facts that clash with it, and that bad reasoners pervert to the support of systems equally frivolous and irreligious.

(47) 2.

* Voltaire in his Letter to M. de la Lande, in the *History of the late discoveries made in the South-Seas*, by M. de Freville.

(47) 2. Was not all antiquity well acquainted with the Pygmy nation, that fought so valiantly against the Cranes? There is a species of men very different from Adam and Eve.

Nat. Displayed t.
v. p. 325.

A. These Pygmies were Monkeys, that fought the Cranes to preserve their young, whom the Cranes wanted to carry off. This observation of M. Pluche is adopted by M. Buffon, *Hist. Nat.* t. xiv. p. 3. “and therefore this Monkey (the *αἰθῆκος* of the Greeks, the *Simia* of the Latins,) did it bear “a still nearer resemblance to man, the ancients had a right to consider it only as an “*Homunculus*, as a botched, unfinished dwarf, “as a Pygmy, in short, able at best to fight “Cranes, whilst Man is able to tame Elephants, “and subdue Lions.” The Poets placed them in Thrace where the men are generally well made. Pliny puts them sometimes in Thrace, sometimes in Æthiopia, near the lakes from which the Nile takes its source. Aristotle and Pomponius Mela give them for their native country this last region. Aulus Gellius carries them all the way to the confines of India. So much uncertainty, such contradictory accounts, are sufficient to convince, that this diminutive people were imaginary beings. Now that

that the whole earth has been travelled over and over, not one Pygmy has been found. The Laplanders and Samojedes, who, in their own country are superior to the Pygmy kind, transplanted into southern climates, reach the usual size of other men. We cannot conclude this matter more properly, than with the words of a real Philosopher. "There is no such

Etude de la

Nrt. par.

M. B. de S.

"thing as a breed of Dwarfs or Giants. Those that are exhibited at fairs, are either P.

"little, short, stunted men, or great long-sided

"beings, without proportion or vigour. They

"reproduce themselves in neither extreme,

"either of tallness or littleness, notwithstanding

"the measures taken for that purpose by

"several Princes, particularly by Frederick I.

"King of Prussia. Besides are they in sufficient

"disproportion to the human species, to

"be called either dwarfs or giants? Is there

"even as much difference between them and us,

"as there is between a little Sardinian horse,

"and a large Brabanter, between a Lady's

"lap-dog, and one of those huge danes, that

"run before our coaches? All nations have

"been, and still are, with very little difference,

"of the same size. I have seen Egyptian

"Mummies, and the bodies of Guanges in

"the Canary Islands, wrapped up in their

“skins. In Malta I have seen taken from a
 “sepulchre hollowed out of the living rock, the
 “skeleton of a Carthaginian, with the bones
 “of violet colour, that had lain there perhaps
 “since the days of Queen Dido. All those
 “bodies were of the common size.” The
 reason the Author gives of this equality in
 the size of the human body is very solid, and
 perfectly consonant with the wisdom of that
 Providence, that preserves and regulates all
 things. “A variety of sizes would, in the
 “physical line, destroy the proportions of man,
 “with most of his own works; and, in the
 “moral line, would have consequences still
 “more dangerous, by enslaving for ever the
 “smaller species of men to the larger.”

 SECTION III.

(48) Q. DO not the Negroes according to some Authors, form a race of men by themselves?

A. The Negroes come white to the world like the Europeans. Their blackness lies only in the scarf-skin, the texture of which, being dilated by the heat, the moisture, and the wind, &c. absorbs a greater quantity of the sun beams. That is, at least, a plausible reason for the tint of the Negroes. But we think

it

it unnecessary* to renew this discussion, after the observations of M. Buffon, and of so many other learned men. We might also refer to the Author of the Philosophical Researches concerning the Americans, if this gentleman reasoned every where with as much good sense as he does on the Negroes, and if a Philosophy subservient to whim, and to all the vagaries of irreligion, did not forbid a prudent reader to go and look for a few good observations among such a multitude of bad ones.

(49) Q. Did you not read in the *Queries on the Encyclopædia*, and in the *Medleys of History*, &c. that the Americans are a produce of the country, like the grass that grows in the fields, and the moss that covers the rocks?

E 2

A. It

* Hist. Nat. t. 3. p. 451, 453 &c. Huet. *Demonst. Evang.* Prop. 4. ch. 27.—Diction. d'Hist. Nat. de M. Valmont, edit. 1769. art. *Negres & Homme*.—Phys. Sac. t. vi. tab. 626.—Helv. or Lettres Prov. Philosoph. p. 317. To the observations contained in those different works, I will add a trait not much known, but very fit to throw a light on this matter. Charles du Bec, vice Admiral of France, of whom mention is made in the *Memoirs of Castelnau*, p. 459. having got a sun-stroke, turned black as a Negro all over his body, and never recovered his natural colour. See the *Bible of La Croix du Maine*, and of *Du Verdier*, 4th edit. by M. Rigoley de Juvigny. t. 5. p. 198. Paris 1773. Some years ago, there was seen a Negro woman, born in the Island of St. Lucia, perfectly black and white in different parts of her body. A likeness of her in wax was carried about all Europe. The like was seen in Lisbon in 1786, and in Paris in 1787. We have a dissertation of Maupertius on a white Negro.

Hist. of the
Birds.

A. It is mortifying to human reason, says M. Buffon relating tales of this kind, to have such errors to confute. Those who have attacked them seriously did them indeed more honour than they deserved. "Such impertinence," says Voltaire, "fit only for a madhouse, has been this some time in fashion, like the monkeys that are made to dance at fairs." Such is the character which this strange excentric philosopher gives of his own opinion.

(50) *Q.* If the Americans are descended from the first man, who was created in the old continent, how shall we account for the peopling of a country so distant from our coasts, and so unknown to all antiquity? Is it not natural to suppose with Paracelsus a first man created in both hemispheres?

A. 1. America is probably contiguous to the north and north east of Asia. Those who, on the word of some travellers, have believed the two regions were absolutely separated by the Sea, seem to have been mistaken*.

2. Though there were at this time no communication between the two continents, it would not follow there was none formerly. The changes the globe has undergone from sudden

* Some observations on this head will be found in the Diction. Geograph. Printed Liege. 2d. Edit. 1787. Art. *Glatiale*, &c.

and violent revolutions, and from the corroding power of time, are incontestable: and though they may not be so considerable since the flood, as certain naturalists imagine, some Isthmuses at least, and some straits may have been formed*.

3. The coasts of both Continents towards the North are certainly not very far asunder, and are always joined by mountains of ice. The space between America and Japan is interspersed with lands, and very extensive islands. M. Buffon observes, that the Americans are very like the eastern and northern Tartars. The author of the *History of Kentucky*, 1785, confirms this remark, and besides, makes ample mention of a people that speaks the Welsh language, and that M. Huet brings down from the Phenicians

* *Vidi ego quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus
Esse fretum, vidi factas ex aquore terras .. Metam. L. 15.
Tempus erit rapidis olim cum Pyramus undis
In sacram veniet congesto littore Cyprum Ibid.*

Cbersonesi, sive Peninsula, in Insulas in Cbersonesos mutantur, Mund. Subt. 4. p. 78. We are not, however, to infer from thence, any great and destructive revolution capable of altering the general state of the globe. If it be true that Plato's *Atlantis* was swallowed up by the sea, and that a similar event gave birth to the Mediterranean, it was only at the flood that such revolutions could take place. These events obscurely recorded in an ancient tradition, have been disfigured by historians of a much later date than the flood. For my part, I willingly assent to the learned and solid dissertation of M. Baer, who gives plausible reasons to prove that the *Atlantis* is nothing else but Palestine. See *Exam. des Epoques*, p. 224. Edit. of 1780. or n. 177. Edit. of 1781. *Journal Hist. & Litter.* 15 May, 1780. p. 122.

rians or the Carthaginians. F. Faque, (*Lett. Edif.* t. xxiii. p. 384.) seems to make out the Palicours savages of North America, descendants of the Jews*. A traveller, who penetrated into America, beyond the Ohio, assures us, there has been found among the savages, a nation of Jews, who call themselves the tribe of Nephtali, he says their worship and tenets are nearly the same with those of the European Jews, though they do not trade like them†. The Sioux have the Chinese accent, but

Qui tradiderunt animas suas pro nomine Domini nostri, &c.
C. A. & 15.

* We quote with confidence the letters of the missionaries. We know what value to set upon the testimony of witnesses, who, to probity and religion, add the experience of a long residence in the countries where they wrote. The author of the *Recherches Philosophiques*, speaks with contempt of these letters; but we chuse rather to abide by the decision of Buffon, Montesquieu, Mairan, Fontenelle, Le Franc, &c. Men who renounced all interested views, and who, according to the words of the Holy Scripture, sacrificed their very existence to the triumph of truth, cannot but be very far from disfiguring it by exaggerations and fictions so common to other travellers. The only article on which their testimony is not always unexceptionable, is that of China, where they have erred from prejudice, seduced by mistaken notions of that proud and feeble nation; particularly as they durst not, on pain of death, speak their mind upon various matters, as we shall see hereafter, n. 267. and judging in short of China from a comparison between it and the savage nations and barbarous countries, they had visited in Africa and America.

† See the Journals and Gazettes of November, 1773. M. Adair, an Englishman, who has resided long in America, and studied the manners, usages and religion of the inhabitants, considers them as descendants of the ancient Jews. See his works entitled *History of the Western Indians, particularly the nations bordering on the Mississippi*, London, 1775. Penn has the same opinion of them in a letter, written in 1683, and inserted in the *Caspian Letters*. London, 1777, at Dilly's.

but their way of living is that of the Tartars. (*Charlev. Hist. of New France.*) M. Huet compares the manners of the Mexicans with those of some ancient Asiatic nations. (*Demonst. Evang.* p. 83, 84.) F. Lafitau published on this resemblance, a work full of curious researches*.

4. Why not suppose that ships bound for other places, were, by stress of weather, driven on these coasts? The Carthaginians and Phenicians were sufficiently skilled in navigation to undertake long voyages, though, in the remote ages of antiquity, that science was not as much improved as it is at present. The Chinese books make mention of several voyages to America, so early as the fifth and sixth century of the Christian *Æra*. The famous passage of Seneca the poet†, seems to prove that the Romans had some knowledge of another Continent.

* *Manners of the Americans compared with those of primitive times.* Robertson, in his *History of America*, attacks this learned work with no less peevishness than injustice. For the other gross errors and bad logick of the English writer in this last work, See *Journal Hist. & Litter. De Luxemb.* 15 March, 1778. p. 393.

† *Venient annis
Tempora seris,
Quando oceanus
Vincula rerum
Laxet; et ingens
Pateat Tellus;
Typhisque novus
Detegat orbes;
Nec sit terris
Ultima Thule.*

Part. 2. P.
14.

continent. F. Lombard found there, a medal of S. Peter, which seemed to be of the first ages of Christianity. (*Lett. Edif.* 21. *Rec.* p. 476.) Some figures, particularly the image of the B. Virgin in Peru, mentioned by F. Kircher, *Mund. Subt.* are pretty good proofs, that Christianity was known there formerly. The Resurrection, and other articles of our Faith, were found established among the Peruvians, when the Spaniards arrived in that country, (*Hist. of Peru, by Aug. De Zarata.*) In Paraguay, visible remains of Christianity have been found. (*Lett. Edif.* t. 25. p. 132.) From all this it is natural to conclude that America has been peopled by more than one way, and more than one nation.

SECTION IV.

(51) Q. What say you of the Acephali, whom S. Augustin, after Pliny and Ælian, makes mention of? Men without heads cannot surely be of the same species with men who have heads.

A. These Acephali are the ancient Blemmians, subdued by Florus, who commanded the Roman army in the reign of the Emperor Marcian, about the year 450. None of Flo-
rus's

rus's soldiers ever said they had fought against headless men. These people had very short necks, their heads were sunk into their bodies, almost to the shoulders, and very long hair completed the disguise. The sermons *ad Fratres in Eremo*, whereof the 47th speaks of the Acephali, are not St. Augustin's; and though they were, it would follow only that he preached to people, among whom it was said there were men without heads; for he does not say he saw any. One should be very cautious how he believes all that is related by some of the ancients, concerning the deformities of the human species. It has been said of some nations that their ears covered them all over. Strabo calls them *Enotocetes*, and considers as fabulous all that Onesicritus relates of them. Those ears, I suppose, were a kind of clothing that hung from their heads. F. Schott, who tells us wonders of these *Enotocetes*, informs us himself, what credit we are to give to his stories, when he gravely asserts, that the horses, oxen, wolves, &c. were transported to America by celestial spirits. He tortures himself to explain tales from Jordan, Olaus Magnus, &c. *Phys. Curios. sa. t. 2. p. 400.* a little more philosophy would have spared him the trouble of these laborious comments.

(52) 2. Though there be but one species in the human race, how can we refuse acknow-

ledging great differences in that species? Have there not been men with horns, Cyclopes, &c.?

A. 1. Most of these monstrosities were but individual*. Very few of them have passed, and that only for a time, from one generation to another. When the general laws of Nature experience any deviation, they strongly exert themselves to restore order, and to put every thing back in its own place.

2. Our travellers have seen neither Cyclopes, nor men with horns, in the countries that were thought to be peopled with those disgraces of human nature. Circassia, where such figures were supposed to exist, is inhabited by a race of very lightly, well-made men†.

3. Acknowledging there may be some reality in the accounts given us of certain monstrosities of the human species, we must rest assured that exaggeration has disfigured the truth and magnified the marvellous. F. Charlevoix, in his *History of New France*, b. 1. p. 20. has the following words: “It is natural to believe
“there may be some exaggeration in that, but
“it is easier to deny extraordinary facts, than to
“explain

* Vide Barthol. *De Hominibus cornutis*. *Phyf. Sac.* t. 7. p. 1486. *Buff. Hist. Nat.* t. 3. p. 403, 506, &c.

† See the work of Michow, a Prebendary of Cracaw, *De Sarmatiâ Asiatica et Europæâ*, lib. 1. He had thoroughly investigated the matter, and concludes his account thus: *Hæc vera sunt, et qui scripsit vera scripsit, et scimus quia verum est Testimonium ejus.*

“ explain them. Besides, is it allowable to
 “ reject all that we cannot account for? Who
 “ can be sure he is acquainted with all the
 “ whims and all the secrets of nature? It is
 “ well known to what a degree the fancy of a
 “ mother is able to affect the fruit she carries.
 “ Experience and even the testimony of Holy
 “ Writ prove it beyond a doubt. Add to that
 “ the odd figures, in which some nations find a
 “ beauty they are so much taken with, as to tor-
 “ ture the bodies of their infants, to compleat
 “ what the mother’s fancy was not able to finish;
 “ and it will be readily understood how there
 “ may be men so different from other men, as to
 “ give some people, who take up things too
 “ hastily, and without allowing themselves
 “ time to look into them, room to frame the
 “ most absurd narratives, which, however,
 “ are not entirely destitute of foundation*.”

(55) 2.

* It is not credible that M. Buffon could be in earnest, when he denied a thing so well ascertained by the longest and most constant experience. If he did it, it is because he had not the courage to acknowledge the existence of a thing, which it was beyond his power, as it is beyond the power of all mankind, to account for. He who speaks of it in the most satisfactory manner, is Malebranche. *Recherche de la verité*, l. 2. 1 part. The celebrated Boerhaave gives here an advice, that may be of use to others, as well as to M. Buffon: *Ergo subest hic aliquid, quod cum naturæ legibus nobis notis minime convenit, neque tamen negari potest, nisi ab eo qui has leges omnes perfectè noverit.* *Prælect. Academicæ.* part. 2. p. 532. See also that

Hist. Nat.
 tom. p. 400.

(53) Q. It is, no doubt, in this sense, that some ancients seemed to have acknowledged national monstrosities in the human species?

A. Yes; and so it is, that we are to understand St. Augustin * and Pliny the naturalist †, if we think it worth our while to vindicate the latter. But this kind of variety does not in the least affect the unity of the species. In the brutes, this difference is often very great; owing either to the influence of the climate, or to the concurrence of some other causes. “ But, as

Hist. Nat. “ M. Buffon judiciously observes, nature seems
Tom. ix. p. 2 “ to have paid a particular respect to the plan
“ traced out to her for the figure of her lord
“ and master. In the human species the influ-
“ ence of the climate is observable only by slight
“ varieties, because this species is only one,
“ and most distinctly separated from every other
“ species. Man, white in Europe, black in
“ Africa, copper-coloured in America, is still

“ the

that excellent work of M. Muis, *Investigatio fabricæ, quæ in partibus Musculos componentibus exstat.* Printed Leyden, 1741. Disc. prel. *Id dicere non vereor,* &c. M. Roussel is just after supporting and corroborating all that by the most sensible arguments. *Phys. Syst. of Woman.* p. 261, &c. Paris, 1775.

* *Non itaque nobis videri absurdum debet, ut, quemadmodum in singulis quibusque gentibus monstra sunt hominum, ita, in universo genere humano, quadam monstra sint gentium.* Lib. 16. de Civit. Dei. cap. 8.

† *Hæc atque alia ex hominum genere ludibria sibi, nobis miracula, ingeniosa fecit natura: et singula quidem quæ fecit in dies at prope boras, quis enumerare valeat? Ad detegendam ejus potentiam, satis sit inter prodigia posuisse Gentes.* Hist. Nat. lib. 7. cap. 2.

" the same man, tinged only with the colour
 " of the climate. As he is born to rule over
 " the whole earth, the whole earth is his do-
 " main : his nature seems to suit itself to every
 " situation. In the southern heats, in the
 " northern frosts, he lives, he multiplies. He
 " is diffused every where, and from so early a
 " date, that he seems* to affect no particular
 " climate." " In proportion," says a philoso-
 " pher, " as nature has affected to diversify the
 " brute species within the same kind, though
 " inhabiting the same land and living on the
 " same food, in the same proportion has she
 " studied uniformity in the human species,
 " notwithstanding the difference of food and cli-
 " mate. In some human individuals, an acci-
 " dental length of the Coccyx, has been constru-
 " ed into a natural characteristic by some people,
 " who from thence immediately inferred a new
 " species of men with tails. Man may be de-
 " graded by the passions of Brutes : but never
 " was his noble figure disgraced with their tails
 " or horns, or cloven feet. Vainly has it been
 " tried, to draw him by insensible gradations to
 " a proximity with the class of Brutes. If
 " there was any race of men with brutish fea-
 " tures, or any brute endued with human rea-
 " son

Etude de l'Esprit
Nat. par M.
B. de S. P.

* See, on this subject, the learned work of M. Blumenbach,
De Generis humani varietate. Printed Gottingen, 1776.

“son, they would have been exposed to public view: we should see some of them in Europe; now, particularly, that the world has been travelled over by so many learned men; and that not only princes, but puppet-show men, bring alive to our fairs, wild zebras, cumbersome elephants, tigers, lions, white bears, nay, and crocodiles, that have been exhibited publicly in London.”

SECTION V.

(54) 2. DO not the Syrens, the Satyrs, the Hippocentaurs belong to the human species? From whence can so monstrous a difference come, if not from the activity and capriciousness of matter?

A. All that the ancients have related of the Syrens, is only a heap of mere fables, that no body, at this day, would offer to repeat, even to old women. It is true there is a kind of fish, which, in its head and breast, bears some faint resemblance to man;* but it is a real

* See Sacch. Hist. Soc. Jes. parte. 2. An. 1560. n. 276.—Stenzivani Miscell. Dec. 2. p. 329. Dict. de Trevoux. Art. *Homme marin*.—Valmont. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. art. *Homme Marin*.

real fish ; and consequently belongs no more to the human race, than the bear does by his eyes, ears, and other senses that he has in common with man * “The Creator,” as M. Buffon Hist. Nat. t. xiv. p. 32. wisely says, “ did not choose to make for the “ body of man, a model entirely different from “ that of the brute, but he penetrated this animal body with his divine breath. Had he “ done the same favour, I don’t say to the monkey, but to the meanest species of the brute “ kind, to that which we consider as the most “ imperfectly organized, that species would “ have soon become the rival of man. Quickened by the spirit, it would have topped “ above

Murin, Edit. 1769, &c.—Robinet, *Vue Philos. de la Nat. Grad. de l’Etre*. ch. 76. (a writer otherwise credulous and given to exaggeration, and exceedingly wrong in his inferences from any observation whatever.) It is a truth not to be doubted, that the resemblance of these fishes to man is next to nothing. I was one day much surprised to see two of these pretended Syrens, of which wonders had been told me, who had no more of the human figure than a frog, set up standing on its hinder legs. M. De Luc has refuted completely, in his *Physical and Moral Letters*, the story of those men-fish, which it has been attempted to incorporate with our species. (See *Journal Hist. and Litt.* 1st. June, 1786. p. 197.) One would be apt to think this idea of sea-men, a-kin to the supposition, that every land animal has its fellow in the sea: a notion completely refuted by Thomas Browne, in his *popular errors*. What is called a *sea-lion*, a *sea-borse*, a *sea-dog*, a *sea-calf*, &c. has nothing to do, in point of figure, with the quadrupeds, after which the above are denominated.

* *Non homines, sed humani animalis imitamenta*, says F. Schott. p. 373. They are not men, but beings that resemble the animal part of man.

“above the rest: it would have thought: it “would have spoken.” In the opinion of M. Buffon, and of almost all the modern naturalists*, the Satyr of the ancients was the Oreng-Outang, a species of monkey pretty like man, from whom, however, he differs outwardly by his nose, which is not prominent, by his forehead, which is too narrow, by his chin, which does not turn up at bottom: his ears are proportionably too large: his eyes too near one another; the interval between his nose and mouth too wide: there are still other differences in the rest of his body. Man preserves always an exclusive air of grandeur and majesty, that bears the stamp of his royalty and dominion over all living creatures; even those that resemble him the most, and walk upright like himself†. In man every thing, even exteriorly, denotes

* Hist. Nat. t. ix. p. 93.—Phyf. Sac. t. i. tab. 84.—Lynæus. Syst. Nat. versus finem.—Dict. d’Hist. Nat. Edit. 1769. Art. *Satyre*, &c.

† Though some monkeys, particularly the Pongo, often walk upright; they go equally upon all-fours. Their hind feet are like those before, as in other brutes, and do not show a different destination. Man walks always upright, and absolutely scorns the quadruped’s way of going. “The foot of man,” says M. Buffon, “is very “different from that of any other animal whatsoever, even “from that of the monkey. The latter is rather a hand than “a foot: the toes are long and arranged like fingers, the “middle toe is larger than the rest, as in the hand. Besides, “the monkey’s foot has no heel like that of man. The sole “of

denotes his superiority : his attitude is that of command : his head looks up to heaven, and presents an august visage, that bears impressed on it the character of his dignity : the image of his soul is painted on his face : the excellence of his nature shines through his corporeal organs, and with a spark divine enlivens his features : his bold steady gait proclaims the nobleness of his rank. We shall have an opportunity of shewing that the Oreng-Outang is no more than a brute. The Hippocentaur is an emblematic figure of a man on horseback. Palephates has given us on that subject a curious dissertation in his *Treatise de Rebus incredibilibus* *

SECTION

" of the human foot is also larger than that of any four-footed animal, and the toes are of great service in poising the body, and securing its motions, walking and running, &c."—(Hist. Nat. t. 2. p. 545.) M. Brown, in his *Popular Errours*, t. 1. p. 432, handles with more jocularity than solidity, the question, *whether man is of all animals the only that walks upright?* Mr. Blumenbach talks of it like a man of sense, and upon solid principles, in his *Treatise De generis humani variatione*, where he refutes, with a decided superiority, the whims of Moscati.

* Some authors thought the Satyrs, the Centaurs, &c. might have been monuments of the horrible corruption of morals, which heathenism occasioned among men, and from which the Christian religion has happily delivered them. But Natural Philosophy seems to militate against that opinion ; and Lucretius opposes it with all the authority of history, and all the springs of nature :

*Nam neque Centauri fuerunt, neque tempore in ullo
Esse queat duplici naturâ, et corpore bino,
Ex alienigenis membris compacta Potestas.*—Lib. 5.

Be

SECTION VI.

(55) Q. DID not a French Consul in Cairo prove, that men were originally fishes, and that the ocean had peopled the earth?

Telliamed,
or, a Dia-
logue be-
tween an
Indian Phi-
losopher,
and a French
Missionary.

A. The head of our unbelievers, speaking one day of this opinion, said it looked as if it was just arrived from bedlam. It would be wronging it to think it new: M. Maillet has not the honour of the invention. The Athenians acknowledged for their progenitors, the ants of the forest of Ægina: The people of Thessaly thought themselves also descended from some other kind of insects. All these whimsical notions are on a par with one another, and worthy of the wise speculations of our materialists. "Now a-days," says Rousseau, with great truth, "nobody studies; nobody observes: We dream, and we gravely give out, for Philosophy, the dreams of some uneasy nights." While Maillet

Be that as it may, certain it is, 1. That these monsters, if ever they existed, were only individuals. 2. That they never were animated with a rational soul. Here are the words of two naturalists equally learned and religious. *Nec verisimile haberi potest, velle Deum optimum maximum, unicum Spirituum Patrem et conditorem, ad horrendos ejusmodi ac nefarios hominum cum brutis congressus subministrare animam rationalem.* Deusing in Fœt. Mussip. Sect. 4. *Anne Deum optimum, maximum ad horrenda Genesim concursum sollicitari posse putabis.* Kirch. Mund. Subt. p. 2. pag. 280.

let brings men from fishes, the author of the *Medleys of Natural Philosophy*, and he who wrote the *Philosophy of Nature*, bring fishes from men*. Happy those who peruse our Philosophers! they have always their choice of two contradictory assertions.

(56) 2. Did not the French Philosopher who reasoned so badly in Egypt, go upon a sure principle, namely, that the Sea is insensibly decreasing?

A. 1. From that principle to the wondrous transformations of which he has composed his history of men and fishes, there is a pretty tolerable length of way.

2. The falshood of the principle is evident from a comparative view of ancient and modern geography. These three thousand years Marseilles, Toulon, Cadiz, Genoa, Tyre, Smyrna, Sidon, Byzantium, Alexandria, &c. are sea ports. If, by a combination of various physical agents, some shores have sunk and others risen; the sea must have advanced or recoiled without increasing or decreasing†. When the Eternal said to it: *Thus far thou shalt come*, he drew not only the line beyond which it was not to advance, but also that within which it was not to stop.

*Huc usque
venies. Job.
38.*

* The monsters we mentioned, n. 54.

† The principle on which they ground the pretended decrease of the Sea, namely the change of the water into air or earth.

SECTION VII.

(57) Q. DO not the prodigious variety of species within the same kind, the degenerations and mixtures of substances*, prove evidently that matter has the power of multiplying natures, and producing new beings?

A. All that proves no more in favour of blind, inert matter, than a clock that strikes the different hours. It proves only that to the feed of beings who live and vegetate, the Creator, by a more or less perfect expansion of its efficacy, or by its combination with different external causes, has given a principle of diversity, suited to the wants and industry of man†, as well as to the extent of his views and researches,

earth, is equally false, contrary to all the notions of sound Philosophy, refuted by the observations of the ablest Chymists. See *examen impartial des Epoques de la Nature*, p. 118, 147. edit. de 1780. n. 97, & 120. edit. de 1781. *Journ. Hist. & Litter.* 2. Dec. 1785. p. 481.

* M. Pluche, by denying that species are susceptible of alteration, and that seed ever degenerates, answers certainly the Materialists in a more laconic manner. But, is the failure of a few badly conducted experiments a sufficient reason for denying a thing ascertained by a simple view of Nature, and proved by such a multiplicity of facts, that it would be more than useless to look for new proofs?

† The most diversified of the brute kind, and the most pliant to the influence of climate, education, &c. are those whose services are the most multiplied, the horse for instance, and more again the dog. See *Importance of the Dog in the order of Nature*. *Hist. Nat. de M. Buff.* tom. p. 187.

researches, while, to simplicity in the plan, it unites magnificence in the execution. Thus it is that man can diversify the fruits, sweeten their wild juices, correct the harshness of simple nature, subdue the brute kind, discriminate their uses and propensities, alter even their figure to a certain degree, and perpetuate through breeds the impression made upon individuals*. But to all that, man contributes only his labour and industry; it is just a discovery he makes of the treasures of nature; and so is the success of his experiments confined within bounds, and limited to the space that God has circumscribed; the mixed substances are but few in number. Vainly would one seek from mere whim to multiply them†; they
either

* That, to be sure, does not go so far as to change darnel into wheat. M. Buffon on this matter adopts a way of reasoning perfectly original. Corn existed before man. If it is no where to be found in a state of wildness, which Travellers have been too ready to deny (as I have proved elsewhere,) and if its preservation requires tillage, it is a visible effect of the sentence passed in the 3d ch. of Genesis, *Maledicta terra in opere tuo; in laboribus comedes ex ea cunctis diebus vite tue . . . In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane.* The seeds of sweet, cultivated fruit, whether degenerated or improved, produce only wild fruit, the first year they are sown; but corn always produces corn. Exam. des Epoques. n. 186, or p. 190, according to the different editions.

† The works of Man, lead us to God, like those of God himself. Cities, Palaces, Fleets, all the productions of Arts and Sciences, proclaim a God more forcibly, perhaps, and more eloquently than the aspect of Nature. It is more to
the

Journ. Hist.
& Litter.
De Luxemb-
bourg. 15th
June 1777,
p. 268.

Buff. Hist.
Nat. tom.
xiii. p. ix.

either do not propagate*, or they soon revert into one of the primitive species. " All the
" accessory touches vary : no individual resembles another perfectly : no species exists
" without a great number of varieties
" but the stamp of each species is a model,
" whereof the principal features are drawn in
" characters indelible, and to last for ever
" and, as the order is fixed for the number,
" the support and balance of the species, nature

the honour of an Artist to make a piece of work that produces great effects, than to produce himself immediately these effects. " From the human mind," says Cicero, " such as it is, we must infer another intellectual being of greater power and divine." *De Nat. Deor.* lib. 2. n. 6. Excellence of the works of plain nature above those that the industry of man has modified and suited to his wants or likings. *Exam. Des Epoques.* p. 230. edit. of 1780. n. 180. edit. of 1781. *Journ. Hist. & Litter.* 1st. June, 1780. p. 191.

* " Here indeed there is some latitude allowed : but that latitude has its bounds. The case is nearly similar to that of the graft, with regard to the stock. Too much disparity between the species, occasions also too much between the liquids and the seed. The complete evolution of the generative organs requires certainly more precision than that of the other organs. Such are the eternal bars, that the author of nature has put to the increase in number of certain species. It seems then we may consider, as animals of the same species, those from whose intercourse there arises a middle sort of individuals, that propagate." *Bennet. Cont. de la Nat.* t. 1. part. 7. ch. xi. Without that wise, that necessary law, which secures every species of animal in a permanent state, all would be confusion in the animal reign. Long since there would be but one species of animals, and that would be of monsters, whose forms combining perpetually in the most whimsical and vicious manner, would come at last to render their very existence impossible.

"ture always shows herself under the same
 "form, and in all climates would be abso-
 "lutely and relatively the same, were it not
 "her custom to diversify as much as possible
 "all the individual forms Nature changes Tom xii. 4
 "nothing in the plans, that have been drawn
 "for her, and in all her works she exhibits
 "the stamp of the Eternal*."

(58) 2. Is not Nature obliged to go through all the combinations possible, as a modern naturalist teaches†?

A. Nature

* A Mule, in the days of Aristotle, said to be prolifick, another in 1703, a third in 1769, were the facts well ascertained, are insufficient to alter the opinion of a general sterility. M. Buffon, (*supp. to the Hist. of Quadrupeds*) agrees that *the sterility of the Mule ought to be considered as positive, since the instances of its becoming prolifick, are so very rare.* If it be true that Dog-Wolves propagate, that is probably, because Dogs and Wolves, and Foxes too perhaps, make but one and the same primitive species. (*See Journ. Hist. & Litt. de Luxembourg 15th April 1777. p. 583.*) But supposing the Mule, or any other mixed being were capable of engendering, the offspring could be only the phenomenon of a day; since 5000 years experience evidently shows, that none but the old original species are permanent and unchangeable, and since no new ones are observed to rise, which Natural Philosophy, if she allowed fecundity to the mongrel, could not account for; and therefore obliges us to recur to the wisdom of the Creator, who has made good and wise laws for securing the primitive species, by preventing strange animals from taking their place, and disfiguring his plan, by usurping a fecundity they did not partake of, as they were not in existence at the time it was shared among the other beings.

*Benedixit
 que illis
 Deus et ait:
 crescite &
 Multiplica-
 mini. Gen.
 I.*

† This true and wise language does not agree very well with other opinions of this Naturalist. We are fond of quoting him when he reasons right. But when, with ex-
 tensive

A. Nature goes through no combinations, but such as are included in the Creator's plan, and such as necessarily flow from them. There are millions and millions of combinations possible, that nature never attempts to execute, because these combinations, though absolutely possible, lie out of the line she is to follow. Her limits are chalked out to her with precision, and those limits she never will pass. Her productions, as M. Buffon wisely observes in the passage just now quoted, are traced out in the plan of the creation. Ages will accumulate, and time will bring about great revolutions, without ever seeing one new species appear. God will form new days and new years, but those days and years will make no change in his work.*

SECTION VIII.

(59) Q. DID not all antiquity believe that plants and animals come without seed: that rottenness alone produced wonderful insects: that

tenfive knowledge a man is swayed by an imperious imagination, it is not possible for him to be steady in his principles. The passage we have just now quoted, refutes wonderfully well what this celebrated man says in too general, and too indefinite a manner, of the fecundity of Mongrel animals, in his supplement to the history of quadrupeds.

* *In Libro tuo omnes scribentur: dies formabuntur, et nomen eis.* Psalm, 138.

that corruption was the only principle of ge-
neration?

*Corruptio
unius est ge-
neratio alio-
rius.*

A. The discovery of the seeds, which is a thing incontestable, has destroyed all these absurd systems; and at the same time, one of the strongest objections of the Atheists, according to the words of a man, who never quarrelled much with irreligious opinions. Voltaire, whom we may boldly quote against the friends of irreligion, adds: "There are at present
" fewer Atheists than ever, since Philosophers
" have acknowledged there is no being that
" vegetates without seed, and no seed without
" a destination."

*Pens. Phi-
loso. n. 19.*

*Pens. de
Volt. p. II.
Edit. 1763*

(60) Q. Then it is false that the mud of the Nile produces frogs, that bees issue from the bodies, or from the excrement of oxen, that cheese begets mites, that eels may be made with flour, &c.

A. If frogs deposit their spawn in the waters and mud of the Nile, why should not frogs issue from it? If grass, which is the food of oxen, is covered with the seed of bees, why should we not see bees issuing from the corrupted body of an ox, or from the excrement of that animal*? If flies infect cheese

VOL. I.

F

with

* We know this experiment has been rejected as contrary to the laws of Nature, but we have very strong reasons to think its success possible.

with their seed, why should not cheese beget mites, destined to become flies? If the seeds of small insects, scattered in all places, as every one knows; if flour and water contain their share of them, why should not flour diluted with water hatch out those insects, that people have thought fit to call eels*? As to the old axiom, *Corruptio unius est generatio alterius*, it is very true, understood according to the school distinction: *Occasionaliter, Concedo: formaliter, Nego*. Rottenness may serve as a matrix, not as

Hist. de
Louis XV.
Tom. 2. p.
232.
Tab. Phil.
de l'Esp. de
Volt. p.
100.

* M. Bonnet. (Contempl. de la Nature, t. 1. p. 262.) asserts that these pretended eels are only agitated threads. And, in reality, there are certain sands, certain mealy substances found in stones, that seem to move in spirits of wine. The Abbé Spalanzani, admitting them to be real insects, proves they do not owe their existence to meal or water, as to productive causes, but merely occasional causes. *Opusculi di fisica animali &c. in Modena*. "People," says Voltaire, "have built upon delusive experiments, to revive the old mistaken notion, that animals could come to life without seed. From thence notions have arisen more chimerical again than those animals.... Needham (says the same) thought he made eels with flour. That chimera took for some time; and some Philosophers, have built a system on that maxim no less false than ridiculous.".... M. Needham has endeavoured to obviate the consequences that materialists might draw, in his notes on the researches of Abbé Spalanzani, chap. 3. p. 34. and in a letter to a friend of his wrote to us in his name in 1774, when he sent us the explanation of his principles, under the title of *General view*, &c. (This Letter, and the answer to it, are inserted in the Journ. Hist. & Litter. of Luxemb. Ap. 14th. 1774, p. 239.) But these attentions of M. Needham are a better proof of his good sense and religion, than of the reality of his discoveries.

as seed to the beings that issue from within it. To form an idea of the smallness to which those seeds may be reduced, and of the facility with which they get into every place, one must keep present to his mind the prodigious divisibility of matter; not only of matter at large, but of matter already well specified, whose nature is only an aggregate of other matters, and the result of a multitude of combinations. From one grain of musk there issues every instant millions and millions of particles, without any sensible diminution of the grain in the space of an hundred years. All those particles are so many small grains of musk, all of the same nature with the body from which they issued. And after that, we cannot conceive how the seeds fly about every where, pervade every thing, and, of course, expand themselves in such matters as are fit for that purpose*! If mud, water, flour, cheese,

F 2

cheese,

* I know some very modern Naturalists, who, at the sight of a bit of straw, of a bit of rotten or soft wood, stirred by some insect that had got into it, and, as I may say, incorporated with it, pretended in down right earnest, that the wood and straw turned to live beings. I know one, occupied in the contemplation of Nature, who, upon seeing a kind of worm expand itself in a horse's hair, lengthening out, and seating its body to that long, narrow sheath, was beginning to persuade himself, that horses breed eels. So true it is, that human reason, with all its excellency and sublimity, is almost always duped and imposed upon by the senses.

cheese, atoms, organised *molecule*, &c. had the power of producing new beings*, what would become of this world? The face of it would be changed every day: every day it would perish, and rise from its ruins: new species would every day swarm about us, and make us forget the old ones. It would be to no purpose, says a Philosopher, to answer, that this would be prevented by the moulds and forms that give shape to matter. The question would still arise, why are those moulds and forms so invariably determined? We have this day men, horses, elephants, trees, rocks, &c. as in the days of Nimrod and Noah: the sun and stars hold on still the same course: the seasons are still the same: the elements keep within the same bounds†: there is only the fancy of materialists that is still on the increase, and teeming with new monsters.

SECTION

* It is a pity, that a man of M. Buffon's abilities should have let himself be led away so far by his taste for systematic knowledge. Though we do the talents of that celebrated naturalist all the justice they are entitled to, we are not to follow him in his deviations; and while we admire his Natural History, we cannot help observing in it great mistakes. See letters to an American, 9 small Volumes 12mo. the 6th and 11th Lett. treat of the subject now before us.

† The Author of *the System of Nature* seems disconcerted by this observation. He owns, that experience contradicts his ideas. *But*, says he, *when experience fails, it is the business of Hypothesis to fix our curiosity, and to suppose that perhaps the human species was formed by successive expansions*, chap. I. p. 82. There is Philosophy indeed! Instead of proving, we must fancy; and when opinions are contradicted by real facts, they are to be supported by imaginary ones.

PHILOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

SECTION IX.

MARY'S HOUSE
HELENB

(61) Q. IF Lucretius raves, when he says that men originally came out of the earth, as frogs do out of the sediment of the Nile, what are we to think of those who pretend, by a chymical process, to produce a new race of men, as Paracelsus, Agrippa, and several modern chymists have boasted they could do*?

A. Both fancies are equally ridiculous, and it would be hard to determine which has it in point of extravagance. As to the creative power of the Alembick, we shall only observe, that the Author of *the System of Nature* has considered it himself as a delirium; since he did not venture to give this curious idea a place among his own, which however do not bate it one inch either in richness of invention, or wondrousness of execution. He has even expressly refuted it, by allowing that *the human seed can not meet with expansion but in the body of a woman*†, t. 2. p. 162. Were it true,

* See the explanation and confutation of this monstrous idea in the *Mundus Subt.* part. 2. p. 279. One may learn from the same Author, what to think of the boasting of those creating Chymists, who have not been able as yet to shew us one fly of their own making, p. 279. &c. &c.

† The fecundity, which some perhaps inaccurate accounts have attributed to Hermaphrodites, is not derogatory from this

true, that man could absolutely be formed, elsewhere than in the place that nature has appointed, it would only follow that the Creator had given a more extensive efficacy to the seed, and an expansion less exclusively determined, than Naturalists have taught us hitherto. How can we but admire men who own, or ought to own, a complete ignorance of what concerns the generation of beings, and yet peremptorily establish new sources of existence, and new means of perpetuating the species. That is reasoning upon a subject, and confessing oneself an utter stranger to it. There has appeared as yet no system on this matter, that could stand the objections it occasioned; and yet people will have every thing to square with their systems; that is, they are bent upon creating,

this rule. Those singularly organized beings, sink into the class of the female sex, and can not form an exception to the general plan chalked out by the Creator, for the preservation and reproduction of the human species. In the astonishing story related by the Journalist of Geneva, February 1775. n. 5. p. 296, we find a real Hermaphrodite, by its inward configuration, though on the outside, there was no sign of Monstrosity. But people should be very cautious how they credit accounts of this kind, in which the facts are always disfigured by additions, arising from admiration. Experience alone can teach, how liable the eyes even of professional men are to be deceived, when, with mistaken notions, and too great a fondness for new discoveries, they observe the extraordinary effects, and calculate the results of certain causes monstrously combined.

ing, and have not so much as an idea of what has been created.

(62) Q. Are you very sure of what you say, in such unqualified terms, concerning the futility of the systems invented to explain the succession of beings?

A. Never did Voltaire write any thing so true, as when he asserts, that *the most learned Philosophers know no more of the matter than the most illiterate men.* Leuwenhoeck's system, though the most absurd of all, succeeded Ovarism, as this did the rest*. Of late it has been warmly attacked by M. Buffon. But this Naturalist, though he copies the ideas, and even the

*Pensées de
Volt. p. 3.*

* To such a degree did Ovarism win the hearts of its admirers, that they contended they spoke only upon the testimony of their eyes. They got drawings and engravings made of these eggs in the different stages of their growth. In 1764 the Jesuits of Warsaw spoke of their existence, as of a thing proved to a demonstration. (See the Theses of the learned F. Lufkina, Professor of Natural Experimental Philosophy in Warsaw, 1764) Nothing can prove better the illusion of the system-spirit, and the influence of that malady on the reason and senses of man. M. Le Clerc (*Bibliot. Ancienne et Moderne*, tom. 4. part. 1. p. 163.) has wisely observed that Microscopy may lead to great mistakes men of prepossessed or superficial minds. Vanity annexing importance to their discoveries, realizes chimerical beings, and substitutes fancy to eye-sight: they think they see all they would wish to have seen. Every one knows that Muschenbroek saw cold plainly, that is to say, the substance opposite to heat, and that the Microscopists in general have seen many things, which their adversaries have denied, and refuted by other things which they had seen equally.

the words of Kircher* in favour of an obsolete opinion, did not surely pretend to more success than his model†. Though the *universal seed* of the one, and the *Molecula* of the other were invincibly determined to take the figure of the being that receives them, it would still remain to know from whence they derive such a wondrous inclination, so rich in its effects, and so incompatible with the nature of blind, inert manner. One would ask again, why those moulds and forms are so invariably determined? For, (let us not mistake the matter) these are not a founder's, or stucco-man's moulds*. The best naturalists confess that the generation

See Lettres
à un Amé-
ricain sur
l'Hist. Nat.
de M. Buf-
fon, let. 6.
Pl. 29.

* I think I have sufficiently proved this assertion in the *Impartial examination of the Epochs of Nature*, p. 174, &c.

† A solid refutation of this system may be seen in the *Opuscula* of the Abbé Spalanzani, translated into French by M. Sennebier 1777. 2 vols. in 8vo. and in M. Ward's *Modern System of Natural Philosophy*. At Newbery's London 1777.

* The Atheist has still many queries to answer. For instance: Who produced the beings, in which these *Moleculæ* are determined to produce similar ones? Why are the beings, from which these *Moleculæ* came, so wonderfully organized? Why does no other matter get an inclination to measure over again the way it went a thousand times before, while those *Moleculæ* work so effectually to settle themselves according to their first disposition? A manuscript now before our eyes expresses very well the nature of this difficulty, which the Atheist cannot resolve: *Non omnis Materia solitaria impressiones sequitur, aut nota requirit loca. Globus centies ad sinistram explosus eodem nisu appetit dextram; sed plastici et vitalis spiritus, Deo sapiente ductore, eam vim pruritumque obtinent, ut esse id laborent quod fuerunt, illius tendant ubi fuerat.*

generation of living beings, is attended with an obscurity, in which the mind of man is lost.

"Nobody," says M. Bonnet, "will imagine that

"I have undertaken to disclose the mystery :

"it remains still under a veil that conceals it

"from the eyes of the greatest naturalists." Con-

fid. on Organized Bodies. Pref. p. 1. William

Muys, a diligent and very judicious observer,

allows in like manner, this obscurity, and the

impossibility of removing it : *id unum mihi sufficit*

hâc ejusmodi hâc seminis artificium esse, ut minimè

ambigam quin tu, si quando ad perspicendum illud

incumbes, ac omnem mentis vim atque aciem inten-

des, quò magis ingenio valeas, quòque altiùs in

id ipsum descendas, eo clariùs, divìno ad hoc inveni-

endum ingenio, divinâ ad hoc efficiendum manu opus

esse videas. Investigat. fab. quæ. in partib.

musculos componentibus extat. Lugduni Batav.

1741. Pref.—Zanchi, a celebrated Jesuit, and

professor of Natural Philosophy in Vienna,

speaks as follows : *fateri cogimur, viventium ori-*

gine obscurius esse nihil ; et, si in cæteris omnibus

infinitam divini artificis sapientiam admiramur, in

hoc certè opere meliori quadam arcana et inexplica-

bili lege operantem illum veneremur oportet. Phys.

Particulari, p. 345. M. Richter, a celebrated

physician of Saxony, says the same thing in an

excellent work in the German language, en-

titled *Erkenntniss des Menschen*, ch. 10. n. 40.
 “ The wonder,” says a French naturalist, “ is
 “ impenetrable, and bears the stamp of divine
 “ power : all the researches of the learned have
 “ failed in it. That is what we know not, and
 “ what, we venture to affirm, never will be
 “ known.” Des Effarts, *Treatise on the Edu-*
cation of Children, p. 2.. M. Buffon confesses
 that the *Molecule*, on which he has built his
 system, are perhaps no more than instruments,
 destined to improve the fluid, tom. 2. p. 230.
 M. Ward, a learned Englishman, and author of
 a modern system of Natural History, &c. after
 refuting the Epigenesis, allows it would be use-
 less to substitute another system in its stead ; be-
 cause, says he, all the efforts of man will never be
 able to rend the veil that covers this mystery.
 These three thousand years the scripture has been
 telling us all that these gentlemen have said: *Tu*
formasti me, et posuisti super me manum tuam.
Mirabilis facta est scientia tua ex me : confortata est,
et non potero ad eam. psalm, 138. Ignoras quâ
ratione conjungantur ossa in ventre pręnantis ? Sic
nescis opera Dei, qui fabricator est omnium ? Eccles.
 11. *Secundum altitudinem tuam, multiplicasti filios*
hominum. psal. 11. *Nescio qualiter in utero meo ap-*
paruisti. Neque enim ego spiritum et animam donavi
vobis, et vitam et singulorum membra non ego ipsa
compegi; sed enim mundi Creator, qui formavit
hominis

hominis nativitatem, quique omnium invenit originem;
 &c. 2 Mach. vii. *Vocans generationes ab initio ego*
Dominus. Isai. 41. From whence S. Jerom, in
 the fourth century, concluded, that no more of
 the matter would be known in the eighteenth,
 and the event has made good his conclusion:
Causasque hujus rei, quo modo de parvulo semine, et
foedissimis initiis tanta vel hominum vel diversarum
rerum pulchritudo nascatur, esse obvolutas et huma-
nis oculis non patere. Epist. 4. lib. 3. ad Fabio-
 lam. *Multiplacimini et replete Terram*
cujus semen in seipso sit super terram. Gen. 1. There
 is the true system of generation, and the best
 explanation that can possibly be given of it.

ARTICLE VI.

Attraction.

(63) Q. Have not some Newtonians proved,
 that attraction alone was sufficient to form the
 world, and that accordingly the world was only
 the effect and the result of attraction?*

A. 1.

* We do not mean here to impugn or to examine the
 system of attraction, such as it has been proposed by New-
 ton, and is still taught by the rational Newtonians, we
 blame only the abuse that Philosophers have made of it.

A. 1. They must, at least, suppose a God, who created the attractive matter; or else, they must suppose eternal matter, and all the absurdities it implies.

See the following article.

2. Is it from all eternity that attraction has formed the world, or only a number of centuries ago? If you adopt the first of these propositions, you adopt an endless succession, and consequently an absurdity. If you admit the second, I ask you why this attraction was idle a whole eternity? so that you must of necessity recur to a first mover and director of this creative attraction.

(64) Q. May not one say that, supposing matter and attraction, there is no need of recurring to a supreme Being, to explain the wonders of nature?

A. To suppose matter and attraction, is supposing a God who produced them, and then there is an end to Atheism. But it is exceedingly ridiculous, 1. To believe that God commissioned attraction to frame a world, and contented himself with just letting her go on with the work: 2. To attempt to explain by attraction, all the effects of nature: to ascribe to it the production of man, of brutes, of plants, &c*. If, as Linnaeus assures†, there are ten:

* See *Philosophical observations on Newton's Systems*, &c. Paris, printed by Berton, 1778, Ent. 2.

† Others reckon many more: Ray says he distinguished upwards of eighteen thousand. Adamson acknowledges near

ten thousand different kinds of plants, and as many of animals, there are twenty thousand laws of motion to be multiplied by as many subordinate laws, as there will be vessels of each kind, the same motion being able only to produce the same organs. What order would there be at this day in the world, if motion and attraction could produce any thing? Old natures would vanish, and new ones take their place; new chaoses, or new combinations ought to form new suns. But, since the existence of man, what change has happened in the world? Motion alters what is made, but it has produced nothing. If to the plain, sublime narrative of the creation, the Scripture had substituted the whims of our philosophers, atoms, gathered at random, forming a superb, inimitable picture: attraction making a ring for Saturn, a moon for the earth, &c. forming the whole world: a comet ploughing up the sun, and driving out of it sparkles that become planets: another, that is become this earth of ours: another with its tail causing the flood: another, with its body feeding the sun, and incorporating with it by the power of attraction:

*In æternum,
Domine, verbum tuum
permanet in
celo. In generationem
et generationem
veritas tua
fundasti terram et
permanet.
Ordinatione
tuâ perseverat dies:
quoniam omnia
serviunt tibi. Psalm.
118.*

another,

forty thousand; but it is probable they did not sufficiently distinguish the specific from the accidental varieties.

another, at the end of the world, causing a general conflagration, &c. &c. Then will those gentlemen have made a full display of all their talents for ridicule, and all their satyrical treasures. "All the philosophers," says Voltaire, "who turn world-makers, seldom make any but ridiculous worlds. They put themselves in God's place; and think with words alone to create an universe. Philosophers, who build systems on the inward constitution of the universe, are like our travellers, who go to Constantinople, and talk of the Seraglio: they saw only the outside, and pretend to know what the sultan is doing within. We weigh matter, we measure it, we decompose it; and beyond these coarse operations, if we attempt to advance one step, we find nothing within us but impotence, and nothing before us, but a bottomless pit. The farther I go, the firmer I would feel in my opinion, that systems are to philosophers, what romances are to women. They have all of them their day, one after another, and end all in being forgotten."

Pensées de
Volt. part 2.
p. 20. 1765

1 part. p. 4.

(65) Q. Is not attraction the cause of all the celestial revolutions, which are one of the great wonders of the universe?

A. Granted:

A: Granted *: but, 1. Is this attraction essential to bodies, or is it, as Newton says, *a law of the Creator*? In the latter case, the merit of attraction is foreign to matter, and even to attraction itself; and in the former, we must say that non-attractive matter implies a contradiction, which is evidently false. 2. Is it attraction that formed the earth, the sun, the planets, and their satellites,†? It is plain

* See the observations we have already quoted. We speak here in the taste and stile of the age. Not, but we know the whole of this matter would require a scrutiny, of which, prepossession in favour of the reigning Philosophy renders men incapable. But, to obtain a hearing, one must adopt what it would be useless for him to deny, and go upon principles generally received. But of late years the system of general attraction has met with some violent shocks, and, in all appearance, will not be long without following the steps of those that went before it.

† I know that romances have been imagined, in which attraction performed all that; but I also know what men of sense have said of them. I moreover think I know the very authors of these ridiculous imaginations laughed at them in their hearts. But one of the principal objects of Philosophical Glory, is to deceive credulous prepossessed readers. "Were Philosophers able to discover the truth, which of them would think the business worth his while? Each of them knows that his system is not built on better grounds than others. Yet he maintains it, because it is his. There is not one of them who, coming to know what is true and what is false, would not prefer the falsehood he invented, to the truth discovered by another. Where is the Philosopher, who, to make a name for himself, would not willingly impose upon mankind? Where is he, who, in the bottom of his heart, proposes to himself any thing besides distinction? So he raises himself above the vulgar, so he eclipses his rivals, what more does he want? The essential for him, is to think differently from other folks."—*Emile*, tom. 3. p. 30.

plain that the rules of attraction depend on the density of the volume, and the constitution of these globes. 3. If the earth was nearer the sun, or farther from it, it would be either burnt, or frozen; and so of the other planets, which are each of them in the place, and at the distance its nature requires. It is not to attraction they are indebted for this happy situation. 4. Is it attraction that put the planets in their respective positions, to be attracted and to move in such or such a manner, &c. that contrived the distances necessary for them not to meet, to jostle, to stop, to obstruct one another this or that way *? 5. Attraction, without the projectile force, would only hurry the planets into the sun; and from whence comes this force of projection, which modern Philosophy has thought fit to associate with attraction? "Let Newton," says the author of *Emile*, t. 3. p. 48. "show us the hand, that shot the planets along the tangent of their orbits." There are many things in astronomy, and fundamental things, that must be looked for elsewhere than in attraction. Leibnitz was right when he said that naturalists might explain, and geometers calculate; but that it was to no purpose; and

*Numquid
ostendisti au-
tera locum?*
Job 38.

Emile, t. 3.
p. 48.

*Essay de
Theodicée*,
n. 345.

* *My dear friends*, says Voltaire, speaking to the Materialists, *either the stars are great geometers, or the Eternal Geometrician has arranged the stars.* See hereafter. n. 74.

and that many things must be admitted, which neither natural Philosophy nor geometry can account for*. Newton often declared the same; and a simple view of nature is sufficient to shew the truth of these assertions.



ARTICLE VII.

Eternity of the World.

(66) Q. INSTEAD of all these ruinous, rotten systems, would it not be expedient to substitute one simple supposition, that of the eternity of the world, and an infinite succession of Beings, produced by one another?

A. Such an infinite succession implies a visible contradiction.

(67) Q. Have there not been divines who thought it possible, and held that God might have created a world from all eternity?

A. These

* The fix principal planets describe round the sun circles, of which he is the centre, and nearly on the same plane. All these regular movements come from no mechanical cause, since the comets follow a different plane. This glorious system of sun, planets and comets, could be formed only by the will and power of an omnipotent, intellectual being. *Ph. Nat. Princ. Mathem.* p. 482. *Cantabrig.* 1713.

A. These divines were well-meaning men, but reasoned very badly. Had they considered 1. That whatever is created, passes essentially from nought to existence, they would have concluded that whatever is created, did not always exist. 2. Had they rightly understood the nature of an eternal succession, they never would have maintained it possible. But the gentlemen who argued so, believed the existence of a Creator; and therefore their opinion cannot serve the Atheists.

(68) *Q.* If an eternal succession of generations to come be possible, why should not an eternal succession of past generations be also possible?

A. There is no comparison to be made between past generations and generations to come. Succession in the time to come would never end, and the men of whom it is to consist, will never all of them exist; otherwise the succession would and would not end. But if the succession is past, all those who compose it have existed. I suppose them then collected together. There is a number that can neither be increased nor diminished. Yet one might add to it the men of 1798, which certainly would make some increase; besides, each man having two eyes and two arms, the infinite number of eyes and arms would

would be greater than the infinite number of men. The case is the same in an infinite number of years: the number of months, days and hours, would surpass the infinite number of years, which is absurd and chimerical; and accordingly the philosophers who have gone farthest astray in framing systems of the world never supposed it to be eternal. There is only Spinoza and a few other Atheists, that have insisted on the nonsensical jargon of eternities and infinities*.

(69) Q. Is there not some more simple reflexion that may be made on this eternal succession, and more within the reach of those who are not fond of reasoning upon infinity?

A. Here is one, which is likely to suit every capacity. In this pretended succession of past generations, which I suppose all assembled this day (for what has existed, may be still supposed to exist) every individual had a father or he had not. If all had a father, there must either be
one

* Lucretius considered the eternity of the world as a mere chimera, that could not stand against even historical proof:

*Præterea, si nulla fuit genitalis origo
Terrarum et Cali, semperque æterna fuere;
Cur supra bellum Thebanum et funera Trojæ
Non alias alii quoque res æcinere Poetæ?*

The ending of the world appeared to him equally incontestable:

Exitium quoque Terrarum Calique futurum.

one who was father to himself, or two that were fathers to one another. If there be one that had no father, it is he evidently that began the succession : but where there is a determined beginning there is no eternity.

(70) Q. May not this argument, which is decisive with regard to eternal generations, be applied to all other Beings that exist ?

A. It certainly may ; as it is impossible that all men should have a father, and that there should not be one a father without being a son, in like manner, it is absolutely impossible that all causes, none excepted, should have a cause, without its being the effect of a further cause : in both cases the same reason stands good : there is a connexion, a relation as essential between the cause and the effect, as between a father and a son. That is evident. From whence I conclude, that, however long one may suppose the chain of successive causes, it will lead at last to a cause that had no cause : otherwise, in that succession of causes, there must be one the cause of itself ; or two, that are causes to each other ; or one at least, the effect of nought.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE VIII.

Final Causes.

SECTION I.

(71) Q. IF some Newtonians have perverted attraction and other fashionable opinions to the purpose of running down religion, can the same be said of Newton their master?

A. That celebrated Philosopher always preserved a profound respect for the Deity, whom the contemplation of Nature discovered to him in every thing.

(72) Q. What argument did he think the fittest to demonstrate invincibly the existence of a Creator infinitely wise and infinitely powerful?

A. That of the final causes, which he deduced from the smallest details of Nature. He did not think it possible for a man of sense, not to discover in a piece of work, the maker's intention, and not to be persuaded of the destination of so many things, that bear such evident marks of the use and end for which they were made. But if each operation of Nature
has

*Numquid
enim vanè
constituisti
omnes filios
hominum?*
Pfal. 88.

has its determined purpose, shall Nature herself and the totality of beings that make up the whole of her, be for no purpose at all? Shall the soul of man, that master-piece, that mistress of the universe, have no other destination but nought? This single reflexion, well weighed, is sufficient to banish all the phantoms of Atheism.

(73) Q. Have there not been Philosophers, who denied the final causes, and considered as a weak man, the author of *Nature Displayed*, who has set them in so clear a light*? Have they not given the nick-name of *Finalists* to those who think that Nature is not blind, and never acts at random?

A. We shall quote the words of a man, who is no friend to the author you have mentioned, and is heard with pleasure by modern Philosophers: "Geometricians, not Philosophers, "have rejected the final causes; but real-
"Philosophers admit them: and, as a well-
"known writer says, a Catechism makes God
"known to children, and Newton demon-
"strates him to men of sense. . . . The design,
"or rather the infinitely various designs, that
"are manifest in the smallest as well as in the
"largest parts of the universe, form a demon-
"stration,

Volt.
thoughts, I
part, p. 8,
21, 21.

* See also *Theologie Physique* de Derham, at the Hague, 1740.

"stration, which, by dint of evidence, is al-
 "most despised by some Philosophers. But
 "Newton in short, thought that the number-
 "less relations, which he was better qualified
 "than others to perceive, were the work of an
 "artist infinitely skilful. It is plain that one
 "must be stark mad, to deny that stomachs
 "were made to digest, eyes to see, ears to
 "hear*. On the other hand, one must have
 "a strange love for final causes, to assert that
 "stones were made for building houses†, and
 "silkworms

* It would be a shocking injustice to rank among these
madmen the celebrated M. Buffon. The dislike he sometimes
 shews to final causes, is rather a kind of distraction, than a
 settled system built upon principle. It is perhaps the better
 to discriminate his work from that of the Abbé Pluche, that
 he thought fit not to keep always in his eye the Creator's
 purpose. There are a thousand passages in the Natural His-
 tory, where the author leaves, in some measure, the materials
 and the mechanism of things, to consider only the result and
 the use of them. He discovers the final causes even in the
 views that seemed the fittest to weaken them, such as the
 irregularities of the surface and inside of the globe. "Let us
 "not be in a hurry to pronounce on the irregularity we
 "observe on the surface of the earth, and on the seeming
 "confusion that occurs within side of it: we will soon find
 "the utility and even the necessity of it."

† I know not whether this love for final causes would be
 so very strange. The Creator foreseeing the wants of man,
 and the progressive efforts of his industry, has created the
 world such as it should be, in order to answer them. There
 is certainly in Nature a general plan, that renders it fit to
 correspond with the toils and researches of its cultivator. It
 must be allowed nevertheless, that some writers have held off
 at too great a distance the final causes, and have looked for
 them in things, that had only a dependent existence, and re-
 lative to a design more extensive and more interesting in its
 object.

“ silk-worms in China, that we might wear
 “ satin in Europe. When the effects are in-
 “ variably the same at all times ; when those
 “ uniform effects are independent of the beings
 “ to which they belong, then there is evidently

Continuati-
 on of tom.
 3. of diverse
 Thoughts,
 p. 340.

Apoc. 1.

“ a final cause.”—Bayle used to say that final
 causes, and the evidence of a design, were meta-
 physically speaking, the weak side of Atheism,
 the rock it never can get over—*Ego sum*
Alpha et Omega, Principium et Finis. There
 is the efficient, there the final cause of all
 beings, and the grave of all nonsensical Philo-
 sophy.

(74) Q. To evince a final cause, and a set
 purpose in the execution of a work, is it not
 necessary to shew that, relative to a given end,
 the work could not have been executed more
 skilfully, and that any other means would not
 have answered ?

A. 1. To remove all doubt of the means
 having been chosen by a skilful operator, it is
 enough that these were well conducted and
 properly applied, and that the effects denote a
 multiplicity of views. So, though God might
 have taken various other ways to produce in us
 the sense of seeing, yet it is evident the eye
 was made to see.

2. In many of the works of Nature, there
 is no alternative that would have answered the
 end

end that God had in view. For instance, among all the possible distances from the sun, at which the earth might have been placed, she is at the degree of remoteness, the best calculated to proportion, to the wants of her inhabitants, the kind influence of that luminous and warming orb. Her situation with regard to sun might have varied in infinitum; and yet the earth has got the most convenient of all, to render, by the vicissitude of the seasons, most of her climates fit to be inhabited*. Of all possible courses, the moon holds that which is of greatest benefit to the earth†. Her distance, among many lengths equally possible, is fixed to that, which, by her pressure on the seas, keeps the waters they contain in that constant, that invariably limited motion of ebbing and flowing, that is found so necessary to prevent their corrupting. The same convenient proportion is observed between the surface of the waters and that of the land, for the vapours that are exhaled, to produce, in sufficient abundance, the showers, the springs and the rivers, which the earth stands in need of, to fertilize her fields, without exposing them

VOL. I.

G

either

* See Th. Brown. *Popular Errors*, tom. 2. p. 141. Kirch. mund. Subt. 1. part. 1. 2. ch. 6. Berham. *Theol. Astron.* 148.

† See Godsched's notes on Fontenelle's *Differt. The existence of God proved by the brutes*, last note.

either to destructive inundations, or to droughts pernicious to living creatures.—The world could not subsist without fire, water, winds, the brackishness and agitation of the sea, &c.—Society would be annihilated by a perfect likeness of all human faces*. There would be no end to the enumeration of cases, in which nothing better can be thought of, nor so good, as what is. Here are two, in a matter of less importance, but that will come perhaps more home to the senses. Of all colours, the green has fallen to the lot of trees and most other plants. Let us suppose them for an instant, red, yellow, white, &c. These colours, it will be found, would not answer, would impair the beauty of the earth, would rob vegetating nature of her chief ornament, and deprive the flowers of all their charms. The green alone seems fit to express the revival of Nature, to contrast happily with the blossoms and fruits, to gladden and delight the eye of man, to prevent the disagreeable sensation, which a sameness of colour appearing every where must occasion, as we find but too sensibly, when the ground has been

* This reflexion will be found set forth with no less solidity than elegance in the opuscula of F. Lessius, *De Providentiâ Numinis. Ratio 7.* Mahomet considered it as a palpable proof of the existence of God. Sura, *De Gracis.* p. 270. Translation by Du Rier, 1611. *Incredulity undeceived,* by Girardin, tom. 2. p. 144.

Nat. Dis-
played, vol.
4 p. 37.

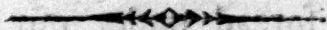
G 2

* The green colour is expressly mentioned in the command given to the earth to produce vegetables, *germinet Terra herbam virentem*, Gen. 1. This colour is so appropriated to plants, that it adheres to no other class of beings, of any considerable extent. The other colours are common to a thousand different objects.

* The green colour is expressly mentioned in the command given to the earth to produce vegetables, *germinet Terra herbam virentem*, Gen. 1. This colour is so appropriated to plants, that it adheres to no other class of beings, of any considerable extent. The other colours are common to a thousand different objects.

La Fontaine, book
9, fable 4.

arise; and these perhaps from what we consider as desirable improvements. In the arts with which we are but imperfectly acquainted, we are apt every day to give advices, which if followed, would have the most disagreeable consequences. We would realize the fable of the Pumpion and the Acorn. How many things do we look upon as indifferent, of which, if they ceased to exist, we would soon feel the importance and the necessity. It must then be allowed that the final causes are strongly marked in the creation and preservation of the world. In many cases we see them expressed with profound wisdom: and in no case do we see any means of expressing them better.



SECTION II.

(75) Q. DO not those who maintain the final causes go upon the principle that all things were made for man, though it appears certain there are many beings that have no reference to us?

A. 1. Though there may be many things, that evidently relate to man, it does not follow that all things were made for his wants or his pleasures. The Creator undoubtedly could, for
his

his own glory, and to display the treasures of his wisdom and power, do great and beautiful things without any reference to man, or to any rational creature. That is the opinion of St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Petavius, Leibnitz, &c. A Philosopher, who has looked for other worlds and other men to fulfil the object of the Creation, has himself acknowledged his errors, and disowned the researches of a misguided imagination. "God," says he, "is himself the spectator of the works he has created; and "who can doubt, but he who made the eye, "can see very well, and delights in doing "so? Enquire no further. Is it not for that, "that he created man, and all that is contained "in the universe*?" Before the creation of man, God was delighted with the sight of his own work, *Vidit Deus lucem, quod esset bona*, Gen. 1. 3. *Vidit Deus quod esset bonum*, v. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25. *Vidit Deus cuncta quæ fecerat, et erant valde bona*, v. 31. This repetition is remarkable. The creatures destitute of reason pay to God a tribute he does not disdain, but views with complacency †.

*Universa
propter se-
met ipsum
operatus est
Dominus.
Prov. 164.*

*Latabitur
Dominus in
operibus suis.
Ps. 103.*

2. The

* Huygens; *Plurality of Worlds*, ch. 8.

† *Benedicite stellæ calî Domino—Benedicite volucres calî Domino—omnia animantia—montes et colles*, Dan. 3. *Stellæ autem dederunt lumen in custodiis suis, et latata sunt; vocata sunt, et dixerunt: adsumus; et luxerunt ei cum jucunditate*, Baruch 3.—*Et omnem creaturam*

2. The fact is, that God intended to render the human intellect spectator of his wonders ; and his wonderful works, tributary to the wants, the abilities and the pleasures of man. Of all the beings we know, is there any that nature is more connected with, than man ? any that understands so well as man, appropriating to itself every produce of nature ? Since then the Creator acted not by chance, but with knowledge and design, he must have intended for the use of man, the things that man has contrived to render useful to himself, over which he exerts a kind of dominion, and that, as every one knows, a very extensive one. Endued with an understanding capable of the greatest discoveries, with a free will that enables me to direct my actions as I please, without servilely obeying a blind instinct, I rule over all things, I bring all things to be subservient to me ; and accordingly from the elephant to the silk-worm, from the cedar of the mountain to the grass of the field, every thing seems to have been made for me. Is the vine sensible of the pleasure of existing ? Does the flower pride itself in the beauty of its colours ?

Does

creaturam quæ in cælo est, et super terram, et sub terrâ, et quæ sunt in mari, et sub eo, omnes audiui dicentes : sedenti in throno et Agno, benedictio, et honor, et gloria, et potestas in sæcula sæculorum. Apoc. 5.

Does the silk-worm, in the ball it has spun, find any thing but its prison? Without me, the diamond would remain confounded with the sand; the metals would only add to the bulk of the mountains, and among such a multitude of living beings, the beauty of the universe would be without a witness, if my soul, which is sensible of it, did not pay it the tribute of her admiration. What animal, in point of enjoyment, has been favoured equally with man? What other besides him admires the firmament—distinguishes the complexion and the shape of a beautiful body? smells the flowers, breathes the perfumes, knows the different inflexions of the voice, is charmed with the sound of musick, delighted with the smallest touches of poetry, of eloquence, of painting, follows up the mazes of algebraick calculation, dives into the depths of mathematicks, &c.? It was a great and beautiful saying, that man is a miniature of the universe. He appears at least, to be connected with all that exists.

“Man,” “says M. Buffon, made to adore the
 “Creator, rules over all other creatures. Vassal Vol. xii. p.
 “of Heaven and Lord of the earth, he digni- xi.
 “fies, he peoples, he enriches it. Even nature
 “herself he embellishes, he cultivates, he ex-
 “tends, he polishes. He clears her of the
 “briar and the thistle, and multiplies the
 “grape

“grape and the rose.” To this beautiful passage we may add one from the Genevian Philosopher. “What being in this world, man excepted, is capable of observing all the others, of measuring, calculating, foreseeing their motions, their effects, and joining, as I may say, a sense of the common, to that of his own individual existence? What is there so ridiculous in the thought, that God has made all things for me, if I am the only one capable of thanking him for all? It is then a truth that man is king of the earth he inhabits. For he not only tames all animals, not only disposes of the elements by his industry, but is the only being upon earth, that can dispose of them; and besides, appropriates to himself, by contemplation, the very stars he cannot approach.”

Amile 1. 3.
R-64.

Bonnet.
Contempla-
tion de la
Nat.

3. The indissoluble chain of beings links together the meanest and the most valuable things, the most superfluous, if any such there be, and the most necessary. *The Polypus*, says a celebrated Naturalist, *the Polypus at the bottom of the sea, is connected with Sirius at the summit of heaven**. Many beings, that seem not made for

* While we honour the abilities of M. Bonnet, and quote with due encomiums his *Contemplation of Nature*, and his *Considerations on Organized Bodies*, we do not adopt his extraordinary

for man, are connected with others, that appear intended evidently for his service, and these without those cannot subsist.

(76) Q. What is the use of that prodigious number of insects, many of which are seen only by the help of the microscope*? To what purpose those immense orbs, which the telescope shows us only as dots?

A. "Doubtless," continues the writer I have just now quoted, wherein he agrees with all sound Philosophers, "the Supreme Intellect
"has bound so close together all the parts of his
"work, that there is not one but has a connexion with the whole system. A mite, a
"mushroom, enter into it as essentially, as the
"cedar and the elephant. The small productions are not like grains of dust adhering to
"the wheels of the machine of the world:
"they are little wheels, that indent in other
"wheels. Each being has its own peculiar
"activity, whose sphere has been determined,
"by

G 3

nary opinions, nor do we approve of the enthusiasm, that reigns throughout his *Palingenesis*; and some other writings of his. If it is unreasonable to admire every thing in an author, because he has said some excellent things, it is equally so to esteem nothing in him, because all is not to be esteemed.

* Even the Microscopists have endeavoured from their discoveries to derive principles of Atheism. Those *invisible* insects, seemed to them to furnish a formidable argument. But it is upwards of seventeen hundred years since it was answered by S. Paul. *Non est ulla creatura invisibilis in conspectu ejus.* Heb. 4. 13.

“ by the rank it was to hold in the universe.
 “ A mite is a very small mover, who con-
 “ spires with movers, whose activity extends
 “ to greater distances: and the spheres
 “ thus widening more and more, this won-
 “ derful progression rises from the sphere of
 “ the mite to the sphere of the sun.” The
 universe, says another, is the indivisible re-
 sult of all the beings it contains. The small
 as well as the large have their place in the
 Creator’s plan. All is bound in it by innume-
 rable links, and by shades in themselves im-
 perceptible, but very perceptible in their pro-
 gress, and very important by their dependence
 on one another*.

(77) Q. This observation, sensible as it is,
 might not be relished by every understanding.
 Have you not some more simple one, on those
 insects, which the vulgar consider as useless
 to the world?

A. “ The small insects feed the larger ones:
 “ these feed the birds and the fish, &c. which,
 “ in their turn, become the food of man. The
 “ animals that multiply exceedingly, for in-
 “ stance, certain insects, have perhaps for
 “ their chief object, to transform a considerable
 “ quantity

* *Incomprehensibili Divinae sapientiae ordinatione factum est, ut nullum tam exile corpusculum sit, quod non in totius unitatem confluat, atque in universam mundi conservationem conspiret.* Kirch Itin. extat. in Lunam.

“ quantity of matter, for the use of different
 “ compounds. Thus it is that matter of the
 “ meanest kind, gives birth to the richest
 “ productions; that from the midst of rotten-
 “ ness the fairest flower, the most delicious
 “ fruit will rise, &c.” *Contempl. of Nature*,
 t. 1. p. 123: “ Man is led to the author of na-
 “ ture by the caterpillar’s thread; and in the
 “ variety of the means, and their tendency to
 “ the same end, he admires the fertility and
 “ wisdom of the intellect that appointed them.”

*Natura nus-
 quam magis
 quam in mi-
 nimis tota.*

*In arcum
 contracta na-
 turae majestas
 nullâ sui par-
 te mirabilior.*
 Plin. Hist.

Nat.

Ibid, tom. 2. p. 169. Hence the following
 well known distich.

Ludit in exiguis divina potentia rebus :

Maximus in minimis cernitur esse Deus.

There is scarce an insect, that is not of some
 use in the medical line: many are specifics of
 amazing efficacy. What wonders are not done
 with earth-worms, wood-lice, Spanish-flies, &c?
 The insects purify the air, preserve its salubrity,
 &c. In short, were it not for the insects, the
 world would not subsist. The proof of this
 assertion will be found in Kircher’s *Mund. Subt.*
 p. 371, &c.

(78) Q. Most of these reflections are verified,
 I suppose, in the plants too?

A. They are visibly. There is hardly a plant
 that does not feed some kind of animal. The
 most poisonous are the very treasures of phy-
 sick.

sick*. Their wonderful variety makes the beauty of the earth. The respiration of the plants is one of the greatest purifiers of the air †.

SECTION

* Is it possible not to see the Providence of God in that prodigious multitude of vegetable, animal and mineral substances, in which man finds so many means of health and preservation? Lavished around him with a profusion, that appears sometimes distressing to him, they become thereby ready objects of contemplation, and are no costly matters in the use and application of them. *Altissimus creavit de terra medicamenta, et vir prudens non abhorrebit ea. Ad agnitionem hominum virtus illorum, et dedit hominibus scientiam Altissimus honorari in mirabilibus suis. In his curans mitigabit dolorem, et unguentarius faciet pigmenta suavitatis, et unctioes conficiet suavitatis. Eccles. xxxiii.*

† "Of all the vegetables," says a learned member of the Royal Society, "that grow upon the earth, from the oak of the forest, to the grass of the field, there is not a plant but is useful to man. If they are not all of them distinguished by peculiar qualities, they are connected with the whole, whose general function is to purify the air of our atmosphere. The fragrant rose and the poisonous plant contribute to the same end. The forests that rise in the most distant countries, and in such as are uninhabited, are also useful to us." *Disc. on the different kinds of air, delivered in the Royal Society of London, by the President, Sir John Pringle, 1774.*—If it be true, as we cannot doubt but it is, that the powerful action of the sun and of the Summer heat, is a very efficient cause of the corruption and consequent infection of the air, have we not good reason to admire that Providence, that covers the earth with an immensity of vegetables, one of the uses of which is to render the air salubrious; their leaves, the instruments of this salubrity, lasting as long as the heat, the instrument of infection, renders them necessary. Accordingly we see them fall, as soon as the cold begins to be felt because it is a still more powerful obstacle to corruption: whereas they subsist in the countries, where heat and cold being perpetual, render their continual action necessary.

SECTION III.

(79) Q. HOW comes it, that among this multitude of beings useful to man, there are some hurtful, or troublesome to him?

A. The strength and genius of man are more extensive than all the beings that seem to oppose his sovereignty. It would be wrong in him to complain of the necessity of being active and laborious: it would be renouncing his noblest titles, and the qualities the most wanting to him in his present state. A life of ease and indolence would sink his dignity, and give rise in his soul to the most monstrous vices. Heathen poets have acknowledged this truth*, and it never will be denied, but by men enervated, and already corrupted by sloth†.

(80) Q. Have not the holy fathers and other divines made other reflections on this subject?

A. They have, and a great many: but as most of them suppose the doctrine of original sin,

* ——— *curis tenent mortalia corda.*

Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno.

Ille malum virus serpentibus addidit atris:

Prædareque lupos jussit, pontumque moveri.

Ut varios usus meditandò extunderet artes. I. Georg.

† Let us bless," says a Philosopher, "the necessity of being watchful, active, and industrious: let us bless that labour for which man is made, and which is the preserver of his innocence and the comfort of his life."

fin, and the revolution it brought on through all nature, we shall not anticipate upon a matter, whereof we reserve the discussion to another time. St. Augustine observes that the annoyance that man experiences from other creatures, prevents him from setting his heart upon this earth, and losing sight of the home that awaits him, and is to purify his happiness from all alloy. Here is the thought of a well-known author, on verses that alarmed, some years ago, a powerful republic: "Thus these
 "formidable vessels, that bear whole armies
 "within them, that disgorge flames on all
 "sides, and seem to be the glory and bulwark
 "of the state, are themselves in dread of the
 "bite of a small animal. God employs no
 "more than a worm, to make men sensible of
 "the frailty of their noblest works." We have already observed that man, by his industry, draws good out of evil, changes poisons into antidotes, and the most noxious things become treasures in the hands of genius.

SECTION IV.

(81) Q. IS not what you have said of the chain of beings, and the indivisible result of the creation, more particularly applicable to the stars?

A. The

A. The Philosophers, almost to a man, have taught, that the world could not. subsist one instant, should a single planet happen to be lost. In the opinion of the Newtonians, which *Tolle unum, mundum in ruinam duxeris. Itin. Extat. c. 8.* makes the world to depend on a perfect equilibrium, kept up by attractions, measured and compensated with wonderful precision, the thing is evident. “As long as the movements of *Buffon. Hist. Nat. tom. xii. p. 6, 7.* the planets and comets, which gravitate towards the sun, while they circulate round the “heavens, continue; he will shine, and fill with his “brightness all the spheres of the world—that “abundant source of light will never fail, never “be drained; because, in a system where all “attracts and is attracted, nothing can be lost, *Tom. xii. p. 5.* “nor totally removed.” It is from the bosom of motion that the equipoise of worlds, and stillness of the universe arises.... Those shocks of *Tom. i. p. 98.* nature, the absence of the moon, the presence of a new planet, whereof the smallest effect would be the catastrophe of the world. But, exclusive of Newtonianism, it is natural to consider the world as a body that cannot subsist without all its parts. So it always was considered. The ancients held that the aggregate of celestial bodies formed a whole, as firmly united, as simple, as indivisible in the views of the

the Creator, as the parts of the human body*. An idiot knows not the purpose of all the wheels and weights of a clock: yet, can a clock subsist without the full collection, and the most accurate arrangement of its parts?

(82) Q. Besides the concurrence of all these orbs to the organization of the machine of the world, have they not some other particular destination?

*Ut sint in
signa, et tem-
pora, et dies,
et annos.
Gen. I.*

A. The planets in concert with the stars serve to measure time. Without the stars, there could be no such thing as navigation. How much indebted is it not to the polar star alone? Without the earth's relation to the stars there would be an end to geography: the earth would be only a wide waste, intersected with mountains, valleys and rivers; that is, all that could be said of it. Even the satellites of Jupiter are of acknowledged utility in determining the longitudes*. The very eclipses, which

*Omnia astra
celi, quæ cre-
avit dominus
deus tuus in
ministerium
cunctis gen-
tibus quæ sub
celo sunt.
Deuter. 4.*

* *Cælum et Terram, campasque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Luna, Titaniaque Astra,
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.*

* These four little planets have been so useful to geography, that it has been more improved by them, as M. De La Lande tells us, than by all the travels and voyages of these last two thousand years. Their frequent eclipses have been, for upwards of a century, the only means employed to determine the longitude. It is only within these few years that the moon is preferred for this purpose. Letter inserted in the *Paris Journal*, 7 January 1787.

which the vulgar look upon as a kind of perturbation, afford the greatest advantages*. I say nothing of the influences, which latterly have been exploded, and are now endeavoured to be revived†. But I cannot be silent on the impression, which heaven, spangled with planets and stars, makes on a man of upright mind, and undepraved heart. There was a celebrated astronomer, who never beheld it without

* The astronomer makes use of them in the way of his profession, and for the most important purposes. The geographer derives no less benefit from them for the improvement of his science. They furnish the chronologist with the means of reforming the computation of time in the remotest ages back, as well as in all subsequent periods. The mariner also may derive from them the greatest assistance for his views and projects; to find out in what longitude he is; to reform his calculations and rectify his reckonings at sea, by which means he is the surer and the safer in his track, through seas he never navigated before. Derham. *Theologia Astron.* p. 158.

† The Newtonians seem much inclined for influences. What is their attraction but an influence? The light comes to us from the sun and stars. That is an influence. Shall we presume to say there is no other? that any other emanation from the celestial orbs is impossible? M. De la Q—— says, *that sowing is not done in the moon, but on earth.* That is an unmeaning jest. There is no sowing in the sun neither. Has the sun, on that account, no influence on the seeds? See the influences explained, and acknowledged to be real in the *Diction. Encyclop. art. Astrology.* M. de la Lande says it would be rashness to doubt of them. "It is plain," says he, "that the attractions, which twice a-day raise the waters of the ocean, may very well influence the state of the atmosphere. I wish physicians would at least consult experience on this matter, and examine whether the crises and paroxysms of maladies have not some correspondence with the situations of the moon relative to the Equinoctial Line, the Syzygies."

*Civitas Re-
gis Magni.
Pfal. 47.*

out respectfully saluting, and calling it with rapturous admiration, *The City of the great King*. Those brilliant lights with which the vault of heaven is adorned, pour into the soul the sacred fire of zeal and religion. Yes, this temple preaches loudly the God it contains, and with what eloquent language does not the night present him to my heart*! The aspect of these

"zygies and the Apfides. Several eminent physicians appeared to me convinced they had; and it was with a view of inducing them to give their minds to this enquiry, that I gave for some years, in the *Medical Gazette*, a detail of the astronomical circumstances they were to attend to." *Abridgement of Astronomy*, Paris, 1774. Derham in his *Theol. Astron.* is absolutely of M. De la Lande's opinion. Astronomers have been sometimes seen to predict, with so much exactness and precision, the temperature of the air, and the state of the seasons, that we have a right, it would seem, to suppose in the planets a very real and a very powerful action on the atmosphere, and of course on the surface, and perhaps on the inward parts of the earth. In short, some modern Naturalists, (Fontana, Maggi, Toaldo, &c.) were so well convinced of the influence of the moon, that, contrary to the most decisive experiments, they have asserted that she warmed the earth, as if there were no other influences but those of heat.

* If the thought of God's existence, and of our own immortality enlivens all nature; if, without that thought, all would be drowned in silence, and in the disconsolate prospect of death and eternal naught, it is chiefly in the sublime region of the stars that it displays that enlivening power. Bright and peaceful luminaries, it is that thought that heightens and dignifies the lustre You shed, it is by that thought that You dispel the horror of the midnight hour, that You adorn the heavens and charm the earth. While You fix my eyes by the radiance and purity of your beams, the liveliness of my faith, the

these sublime unfathomable regions, which, but for the stars, would have something in them saddening and terrifick, and some affinity with the overwhelming idea of naught, becomes, by the sparkling and the active lustre of that multitude of lights, a spectacle full of dignity, of majesty and glory*. Fontenelle is right when he doubts whether the fairest day ought not to yield the palm of beauty to a fine serene night. *I have seen, says Maupertuis, of those nights fairer than days, that made one forget the sweetness of the morn, and the splendor of noon.* If tomorrow, - says another Philosopher, the hand of the Eternal should in fiery letters write on a cloud, MORTALS, ADORE YOUR GOD, who can doubt but every man living would fall on his knees and adore? Ah! what need have we that God should speak to us in French, English, Arabic or Chinese? What are those stars strewed over the firmament, but so many characters legible and intelligible to us all, which

the sweetness of my hope, excite in my soul, the most delightful emotions! Cheerless Philosophy, where you see nothing but sparks, scattered at random over the vast expanse; I see, I hear (to borrow the words of an holy Father) the most eloquent the most indefatigable panegyrists of the Deity. *Prædicatione perpetuâ sui loquuntur majestatem auctoris.* Chrysostom.

* *Vas castrorum in excelsis, in firmamento cæli resplendens gloriose Species cæli, gloria stellarum; mundum illuminans in excelsis Dominus. In verbis sancti stabunt ad judicium, et non deficient in vigiliis suis.* Eccclus. 43.

which, in the awful silence of a calm night, proclaim the power and extent of the hand that made them?

(83) Q. Is there not a vast number of stars invisible to our eyes, even assisted by the telescope, and that contribute nothing to the beauty of the Heavens?

A. 1. The great orbs we do not see, are links of the universe as well as those we do. This we have said already.

2. Though man does not see those stars, the knowledge he has of their existence and number, which he may well suppose to be of many millions, lead him equally to adore and praise the Author of so grand, and so extensive a work*.

*Eum me lau-
darent simul
astra matuti-
na, et jubila-
rent omnes
filii Dei.
Job 38.*

3. The celestial spirits see them. The saints will see them when time is at an end†. Besides the enjoyment of God, which will constitute the happiness of his elect, they will have the sight and dominion of all his creatures‡.

This

* *Qui fecit Arcturum, et Oriona, et Hyadas, et interiora Austrum, et mirabilia quorum non est numerus. Job 9.*

† S. Jerom is of opinion that they see and enjoy them actually. L. 3. Epist. 13.

‡ The reasons and the structure of those wonderful works, that have occupied the Creator, will be well worth our occupying ourselves with them, in that life to which we all so eagerly tend. Nature Displayed. tom. 4. p. 24.

Ecce enim ego creo celos novos et terram novam. Gaudebitis et exultabitis usque in sempiternum, in his quae ego creo. Isai. 65.

17. *Regnabimus.*

This opinion has certainly nothing in it objectionable, and can not fail of being adopted by those, who, knowing the narrow bounds of the human mind, aspire to another life, where nature will no more be covered with a veil. Several Philosophers both ancient and modern appear convinced of it. The Authors of *Nature Displayed*, of the *Physica Sacra*, Mullerus (*Disput. de Galaxiâ*) &c. are of this number. Pythagoras's Musick of the celestial spheres is an allegorical expression of the pleasure which intellectual beings take in viewing them. Cicero, in his *Somnium Scipionis*, has commented on the idea of Pythagoras, cap. 4. Plato thought the souls contemplated God among the stars. A Philosophick Poet, after dwelling a little too long on the plurality of worlds, concludes with believing that "the stars are
 " perhaps no more, than grand, refulgent
 " thrones, on which the ministers of the Eter-
 " nal sit in majestick state, executing through-
 " out the universe the decrees of his love or
 " of his vengeance."

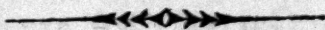
*Plato in
Phaedro.
Idem in
Phaedone.
Idem in Ti-
maeo.
Young's
Night
Thoughts.
vol. 2. p.
178.*

(84) Q. May we not think that the Planets are so many inhabited worlds?

A. It

17. *Regnabimus super terram. Apoc. 5.—Quoniam videbo calos tuos, opera digitorum tuorum, lunam et stellas quæ tu fundasti. Psal. 8.*

A. It has been again lately proved, that this opinion, so much in vogue at this day, is equally unbecoming the Philosopher and the Divine. Natural philosophy, astronomy, plain common sense, concur in reprobating it*. The reasons alledged for so doing seem to us obvious and convincing.



SECTION V.

(85) *Q.* IF Nature is intended for the service of man, how comes it that her treasures are found out only by slow successive discoveries? We enjoy to-day what was looked upon for many centuries with an eye of indifference, or was absolutely unknown.

A. Those very discoveries, together with the new branches of knowledge both speculative and practical, are necessary to feed the curiosity, the ingenuity and the industry of man. It would not be his interest to know all the secrets of nature, and all her treasures: but it is his interest to study them, and the indispensable task which the activity of his reason imposes

* See the fourth and fifth Discourse of the *Philosophical Observations* already quoted.

poses on him*. The prudent economy of nature, in the dispensation of her gifts, prevents her wasting herself, even in the most enlightened ages; she keeps always in reserve some wonderful secret for succeeding generations, and prepares new tributes of admiration for the greatness, and the inexhaustible power, of her Author†. This truth can not be better expressed than in the words of an historian, no less remarkable for elegance than good sense.

Hæc, atque alia his similia subinde rariora miracula effector mundi ostendit, ut homines quamvis in hac rerum universitate tam multa quotidie summâ admiratione digna conspiciant, tamen intelligant plura esse quæ de illa infinitâ vi sapientiâque ignorant; ut saltem ex inusitatis hiscè, quoniam assuetudo cæteris auctoritatem ademit, in admirationem ejus et venerationem excitentur. Sacch. Hist. Soc. p. 2. anno 1560. n. 276.

(86) 2. Why are some countries blest with all the favours of nature, while others are abandoned to the winter frosts, and all the severities of indigence? If the earth is beautiful

* *Cuncta fecit bona in tempore suo, et mundum tradidit dispositioni eorum, ut non inveniatur homo opus quod operatus est Deus ab initio usque ad finem.* Eccles. 3.

† *Dies diei eructat verbum, et nox nocti invicat scientiam.* Pl. 19. *Omne opus hora sua subministrabit.* Eccles. 39. *Ut cognoscat generatio altera, filii qui nascentur et exurgent.* Pl. 77. *Multa abscondita sunt majora his; pauca enim vidimus operum ejus.* Eccles. 46.

ful and productive only for the pleasures and wants of man, why does not man in all countries enjoy its benefits?

*Sed Deus
temperavit
corpus ei cui
deerat abun-
dantior
tribuens bo-
norem, ut
non sit schif-
ma in corpo-
re. I. Cor.
12.*

A. There is no country in the world that enjoys at once all the blessings of climate, soil, commerce, &c. nor is there any country totally deprived of them. Those that appear to us the least favoured by nature, have great resources of their own. Norway, for instance, and the provinces subject to the inclemencies of the Pole, find in their very situation a source of wealth, which happier climates might envy, and which we ourselves are glad to go and look for there*. This is what Doctor Pontopidan, Lutheran Bishop of Bergen in Norway, observed to his flock, in an excellent pastoral letter he addressed them, which appeared in the public papers of the time†. The sea, subdued by man, has enriched each province with the produce of every climate. The various and unequal fertility of the earth is become the link of nations, and has brought the world into a society formed by mutual wants and reliefs.

in

* Here is what an ancient Poet says on the subject,
..... Nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores
India mittit ebur, molles sua thura Sabæi?
At Chalybes nudi ferrum, viroque Pontus
Castorea, Eliadum palmas Epirus Equarum.
Continuò has leges, æternaque fœdera certis
Imposuit Natura locis I. Georg.

* It was printed at Nyons, Paris, 1760.

In some countries poisons abound, and so do antidotes also: each evil finds every where a remedy to counteract it. The most shaggy desarts, the wildest wastes have their utility. In the works of nature they are what the shades are in a picture: they heighten the beauty of the other parts, and shew them to greater advantage. In a rich and smiling country, the habit of seeing wonders, succeeding one another without interruption, renders us insensible to them. The constancy of the show blunts the pleasure, and weakens its impression on the mind as well as on the eye. We reserve our admiration for what is foreign or extraordinary. Novelty, rather than the wonder we behold, rouses our attention. Thoughtless in the midst of objects the fittest to make us think, our inattention leads us to ingratitude. But the sight of barren mountains and parched up plains, shews us to what a climate we might have been reduced, and that it is by a signal favour we find ourselves inhabitants of a delightful country to which we had no right.

SECTION V.

(87) Q. THOUGH there were some beings, whose final causes we could not point out, would it follow that such beings have no final cause?

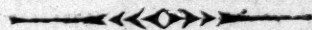
A. The springs and wheels of a watch cease not to be necessary for the direction of the hands, because there are many, who know not how they contribute to that effect. Many are the things, of which the destination is still unknown. In our bodies there are many that anatomy has not yet explained. Many beings formerly thought useless, are now acknowledged to be the main links of the universe.

CHAPTER III.

THE AGREEMENT OF ALL MEN IN THE
PROFESSION OF A GOD.

A QUESTION CONCERNING SOME ATTRIBUTES
OF GOD.

A DIGRESSION ON THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL,
OPTIMISM.



SECTION I.

(88) Q. IS the agreement of all nations in the profession of a God, a solid proof of his existence?

A. Who can doubt it, since this agreement shews the strength of the arguments both physical, metaphysical and moral, that establish the necessity of a supreme Being? From end to end of the world, all men have assented to the truth of the principles, by which Atheism is confuted: all have been sensible that matter cannot move itself: wherever they supposed motion, there they supposed a moving spirit: all have acknowledged that the order that reigns
H 2 throughout

throughout the universe, is the work of a knowing and wise Creator : all have understood the necessity of a moral order, the distinction between good and evil, between vice and virtue : all have yielded to the invincible feeling of their dependence, and to the soaring tendency of the soul towards the Author of her being.

(89) 2. Are there not opinions considered now-a-days, as false, such as the belief in ghosts, in magic, &c. that were formerly as much in vogue among the nations of the world ?

A. 1. These opinions were never so unanimous, so constant, so universal. In all nations, in all ages, how many persons, who believed in God, did not believe in magic ; while, on the contrary, all those who believed in magic, much more, and by a new inevitable consequence, must have believed the existence of God. 2. Some of these opinions bear upon the testimony of the senses, which are apt to deceive : that of ghosts, for instance, depends entirely on the eyes. But God, not being an object of sense, can be known to all the nations of the earth, only by the general, uniform, evident testimony of reason. 3. These opinions, whether false, or supposed false (which we do not examine here) are a sequel and consequence of some incontestable principle. People

ple believed in ghosts, only because they believed the immortality of the soul, which is a capital truth: and the opinion concerning magic, has a reference to the existence of spirits, which no man of sense ever denied.

*Infra, n.
319, &c.*

(90) Q. Is it not perhaps Ignorance or Fear, that established in the world the belief of a God?

A. It is not Ignorance, since the belief is, as I have just now said, a consequence of the most evident and most incontestable arguments. Nor is it Fear, 1. Because fear could not possibly extinguish every light of reason, nor reject every demonstration, to be itself alone attended to. 2. Because, rationally speaking, it is no more possible to fear a thing before its existence is believed, than it is to love or to hate it. 3. When did fear effect this powerful persuasion? It is easy to quote history; but to quote it without mentioning a date, a monument, an author, satisfies nobody. All the histories in the world, speak of a God, as known by the voice of nature and reason*. Not one informs us that the belief of a God was produced by fear.

* The first sacrifices mentioned in history are those of Abel and Cain. Those sacrifices had no other object, but that of acknowledging God's favours, and doing homage to his greatness, his power, his wisdom, and his sovereign bounty.

fear. A Philosopher, who cannot be suspected, assures on the contrary, that it is the idea of a God that produced the fear of his judgments*.

Satyricon,
p. 524.

Edit. Amstel.
1669.

4. The first that started this paradox, was a libertine too deeply concerned in warring upon a truth, so much to be dreaded by every bad man, and consequently an evidence not to be admitted. It was the infamous Petronius, deservedly called *Auctor purissimæ Impuritatis*. It is after him that Raynal defines religion, *the effect of a sense of our miseries, and of the fear of the invisible powers*†. 5. The fear so natural to man, and the inevitable effect of his weakness and dependence, did not beget the belief of a God, but it has proved the necessity and consequence of his existence.

(91) 2. May we not believe that the idea of a God originates in the policy of law-makers, who

* This observation of Bayle's is very remarkable in an author of his cast. "We can say the direct contrary of what this profane, licentious Philosopher said, not so much from conviction, as from the pleasure of saying a witticism, that it was fear that established the belief of a Deity; it is, on the contrary, the fear alone of punishment, that makes some people work themselves into a persuasion, that there is no God."

† Hist. Philosoph. et Polit. l. 7. p. 1. Agreeable to this odious definition, the author gives himself up to all the enthusiasm of hatred. The pictures he draws of religion, are all of the deepest black, and take their colour from that gloomy, false imagination. Such is the usual way with those gentlemen. They create phantoms of their own, and then fight them till they are tired.

who wanted to cement the supreme authority by the belief of an invisible, eternal judge?

A. To believe that, it would be requisite, 1. to do away all the proofs of the existence of God. 2. to prove the assertion by facts, dates, and historical evidence. 3. to reconcile this assertion of the Atheists with the doctrine of their own leaders, who inform us, that *the Deity is the greatest enemy to sovereigns, and that his ministers are their rivals*. The idea of a God and a religion is prior to all society and all legislation: nay, it is the foundation of both.

Essay on
Prejudices,
p. 387.

“The establishment of public and solemn worship,” says the learned author of *the Origin of Laws*, “is without doubt, what has contributed most to humanize nations, to maintain and consolidate societies. The existence of a supreme Being, the sovereign Lord of all things, and absolute master of all events, is one of those primary truths with which every rational being, that means to make use of his reason feels himself impressed and affected. From this inward feeling comes the natural idea of recurring in all cases of distress, to that omnipotent Being, of invoking him in all pressing dangers, and of courting his favour and protection, by exterior acts of submission and respect. Religion

Origin of
Laws, Arts,
& Sciences,
1 p. ch. x.
a. 1.

“ gion is therefore prior to the establishment
 “ of civil societies, and independent of all hu-
 “ man conventions.”

(92) Q. Though all nations know and adore a God, is not that knowledge very different in different countries; and therefore is it not, as the author of the *Philosophy of common sense* calls it, a *Metaphysication*, to allege the general consent of mankind in support of that tenet?

A. An hundred good or bad consequences deduced from one and the same principle prove that the principle is generally received, that it has met with general approbation, and operated general conviction. Whatever may be the notions that people have formed to themselves of the Deity, they agree it exists, and that contradicting that belief, would be insulting every dictate of reason. That is no *Metaphysication*, but a very plain and very obvious reflexion. One may be mistaken in describing the maker of a watch: but there can be no doubt but there is one. People adopt, says Cicero, false ideas of the Deity; but they believe nevertheless, that it exists. All sorts of knowledge degenerate in time. Pure and simple in their sources, the farther they run, the readier they are to mingle with the torrent of falsehood. Certain it is, that

*Omnes de
 Diisprava
 sentiunt.
 Omnes ta-
 men esse vim
 et naturam
 divinam cen-
 sent.*

that* Polytheism only succeeded the belief of one God. As often as reason has exerted her rights from pole to pole, from Spain to Japan, people have spoken of God like the Jews and Christians. Greeks, Romans, Turks, Chinese, &c. all express themselves in terms suited to his infinite greatness†. “Nothing,” says one of the

*Audivimus
eos loquentes
nostris lin-
guis magna-
lia Dei.*
Act 2. 11.

* A Philosopher, who is ever occupied in confusing himself and contradicting his colleagues, acknowledges this, and expresses it in his own way. “In point of religion a direct contrary course has been taken to that which has been pursued in respect to clothing, lodging and feeding. We began with caves, huts, beast’s-skin cloths and acorns. After that, we had bread, wholesome victuals, clothes of spun wool and silk, clean convenient houses. But in what concerns religion, we are come back to the acorns, beast’s skins and caves.” The author of *the System of Nature* adds: “Theism has been every where corrupted, and has formed by degrees those superstitions, with which mankind have let themselves be infected.” See Hist. of the primary causes by M. Batteux, p. 114, 185, 399.—Refutation of the Crit. Apol. part. I. p. 190.—Exam. of Materialism.—Diction. of Heresies.—Origin of the Heathen Gods, Prelim. Disc.—History of the Infernal Gods by M. Delandine.—Memoirs for the Hist. of the Secret Religion of ancient Nations, by the Baron de St. Croix.—Hist. & Litter. Journ. 15 Nov. 1785, p. 416, &c. &c.—But, exclusive of the arguments, authorities and facts that establish this assertion, we may safely say, that it is agreeable to the common course of human things, that always go degenerating and corrupting, unless persevering efforts prevent or retard the effect of this fatal tendency:

*Vidi lecta diu et multo spectata labore,
Degenerare tamen, ni vis humana quotannis
Maxima quæque manu legeret; sic omnia fatis
In pejus rueret, et retro sublapsa referri.* I Georg.

† Disc. on Mythology by Ramsay, 1 part.—Refut. of the Crit. Exam. 2. part, p. 68.—Exist. of God by M. Bullet. 2 part, p. 7.—Vice opposed by profane authors, book 1. chap. 2. &c. &c.

Pind. Od. the most ancient poets of Greece, "no, nothing
 Olymp. 1, 2, " in the whole world escapes his eye: his
 7, 10, Pyth. " providence extends to all: it is he that en-
 5. " lightens us: he is omnipotent: nothing, in
 " short, is done but by him." One of the finest
 geniuses of ancient Rome speaks of the Deity in
 the following words:

Hor. lib.
 Odarum,
 Ode 12.

QUI MARE ET TERRAS, VARIISQUE MUNDUM
 TEMPERAT HORIS.
 UNDE NIL MAJUS GENERATUR IPSO,
 NEC VIGET QUID QUAM SIMILE, AUT SECUNDUM.

At Alba
 Julia in
 Transylva-
 nia.

We have seen some very ancient Roman
 Monuments, that bore the following inscrip-
 tions:

JOVI SUMMO,
 EXSUPERANTISSIMO,
 DIVINARUM, HUMANARUMQUE RERUM
 RECTORI,
 FATORUM ARBITRO.

JOVI OPTIMO, MAXIMO,
 SERVATORI,
 CONSERVATORI.

DEO MAGNO ETERNO.

The

The Chinese emperor Kang-hi, after declaring that, by the name of *Tien* and *Chan-ti*, the people of China adored the true God*, wrote with his own hand, the following inscriptions for the front of the Christian Church in Pekin.

ON THE FRIEZE.

To the true origin of all Things.

ON THE FIRST COLUMN.

He is infinitely good, and infinitely just.
He enlightens, he supports, he rules all things
With supreme authority and sovereign justice.

ON THE SECOND COLUMN.

He had no beginning and will have no end.
He made all things from the beginning.
It is he who governs them, and is their real Lord.

Saadi,

* M. Paw will have it that these words cannot signify the true God, because F. Martini says, the Chinese have no term to express the name of *God*. According to his own principles he ought to have reasoned quite otherwise. The Chinese, according to M. Paw, acknowledge a God: the Atheism imputed to them is imaginary. Yet they have no term to express *God*. They must then understand the Deity by the words *Tien*, Heaven, or *Chan-ti*, virtue of Heaven; or let M. Paw teach us some other Chinese word, expressive of the Creator, whom they acknowledge, and of whom *some of them speak nearly as the Mahometans do*. If we had not in our language the word *God*, surely that of *Omnipotent, Eternal, King of Heaven*, &c. would supply its place.

Philos. Recherches on the Egyptians, and the Chinese, tom. 2, sect. 8, edit. of Berlin, p. 260, p. 200.

Saadi, a Bactrian Poet, has the following passage :

He knows distinctly what ne'er had existence :
 Of what was never heard his ear is full.
 With the eternal graver of his foresight,
 The child he sketches in its mother's womb.
 From East to West his hand transports the fur.
 The massy mountains he with rubies fows :
 Of water he takes two drops, and of the one
 He forms a man ; the other beneath the deep
 He moulds into the pearl's resplendent ball.
 Being, at his word, started from dreary naught.
 Speak he : that instant shall the universe
 Sink in the wide immensity of void :
 Speak he again : again the world shall start
 From naught's abyss into the fields of being.

Lett. edif.

tom. 10. p. 15.

Here is the prayer with which the Bramins, or Indian priests, address God : “ I adore that
 “ Being that is subject neither to change nor
 “ disquietude ; that Being whose nature is in-
 “ divisible ; that Being, whose spirituality
 “ admits of no compounding qualities ; that
 “ Being, the origin and cause of all other Be-
 “ ings, and that surpasses them all in excel-
 “ lence : that Being, that supports the universe,
 “ and is the source of the triple power.” The

Flaccourt.
 Hist. of
 Madagaf-
 ear, p. 182.

prayer of the savages of Madagascar, is not
 so concise : but stripped of its circumlocutions,
 it expresses the following sense : “ O, thou
 “ Eternal ! take pity on me, for I am but a
 “ passenger : O, thou infinite ! take pity on
 “ me, for I am but an atom : O, thou strong !
 “ take pity on me, for I am feeble : O, thou
 “ source

“ source of life ! take pity on me, for I am on
 “ the verge of death : O, thou beneficent !
 “ take pity on me, for I am poor : O, thou
 “ omnipotent ! take pity on me, for I can do
 “ nothing.”

In short, the apostles of Atheism, who pretend they can form no idea of God, who abjure his essence, who accuse his attributes of contradiction, have expressed themselves like other men, as often as, their delirium subsiding, they thought fit to speak agreeable to the dictates of reason.

(93) 2. Though the belief of a God be generally diffused, does it not admit of some exception ? May not man become savage and barbarous to such a degree, as to have no idea at all of his Maker ?

A. 1 Such an exception is not conclusive against the general sense of mankind. If it be fact, that bodies ill organized, and many centuries of brutal life can so far degrade an immortal soul, as to have no knowledge of nature, or its Author, it is senseless to go and collect the testimony of such poor savages, and set it in opposition to the light that reason diffuses, wherever she enjoys her natural rights.

2. It is hard to believe there can be any men brutified to such a pitch. I have seen (says a traveller,

Lett. to the
Archbp. of
Paris, p. 34.

traveller, a sensible attentive man) I have seen pretty nearly myself in different countries, how far human stupidity can go. Though it goes very far, and farther than is generally thought, particularly with nations of monstrous immorality, and inveterate habits of all sorts of crimes*; I do not however believe it can go so far as that. Vainly does Rousseau tell us, that *it is proved, to a demonstration, impossible for a savage, at the distance he is from human society, ever to raise his thoughts to the knowledge of God.* An assertion unsupported by proof is as easily denied, as advanced. Savages indeed are no great reasoners; they do not much trouble themselves about efficient or final causes: but that is not enough to authorize the assertion that, in a length of years, the grand spectacle of heaven and earth never drew the attention of any of them towards the Creator. Here we may quote Rousseau himself.

Emile, tom.
3. p. 57.

“ You will ask me, Where do you see that
“ mighty being, that God, exist? Not only in
“ the heavens that revolve over our heads, in
“ the sun that enlightens us, not only in
“ myself, but in that sheep that crops the
“ grass, in that bird that flies, in that leaf that

Ibid. p. 66.

“ is swept away by the wind. I do not want to
“ know

* *Immania contra naturam scelera, multarum generationum usu radicata, dum corpus corrumpunt, animam prodigialiter excacant, atque ad sensus a ratione deterquent.* Auctor anony.

“ know how to worship him : Nature herself “ teaches me that.” At the sight of an handsome piece of work, we ask *Who is the inventor? Who is the maker? What is the use of it?* Those questions are inseparable from the nature of the human mind : they are in the mouth of children as well as of philosophers, of idiots as well as of the greatest scholars. And why should they take place upon the most trifling, sooner than upon the most interesting occasions, and the fittest of all to engage our senses and understandings? “ If those men, blind as they are,” says the author of the Book of Wisdom, “ have been “ able to compass a knowledge of the world*, “ much more were they able to find out the “ Lord and Master of the world, for they ask “ different questions concerning the works of “ God, and are convinced of their goodness “ and excellence.” Where is the house, says St. Paul, that had not its architect? Now, the architect of the world is God†. We find nearly the same thought in the following Distich of a profane poet :

*Nulla domus Domino caruit: Vos, hancine tantam
Nullius Domini creditis esse Domum?*

J. Owens

(94) 2.

* *Si enim tantum potuerunt scire, ut possent æstimare sæculum, quomodo non hujus dominum facilius invenerunt? Sap. 13. Etenim cum in operibus illius conversentur, inquirunt et persuasum habent, quoniam bona sunt quæ videntur.* Ibid.

† *Omnis namque Domus fabricatur ab aliquo: qui autem omnia creavit Deus est.* Heb. iii. 4.

(94) Q. Have not certain travellers reported that, sure enough, there were some nations, that had no knowledge of God?

A. Yes; but other travellers, better informed, have contradicted these reports. Time, application, and a thorough knowledge of the manners and opinions of a nation, are requisite to enable one to pronounce that they have no religion, no idea of God, nor of the principles of natural equity*. Though men had not sufficiently reflected, to form a code of religious laws, sanctioned by the body of the nation, and to express their belief by sacred ceremonies and practices; it does not follow they have no idea, no sense at all of the Deity, no inward motion impelling now and then their souls towards their Creator†.

(95) Q.

* While some Philosophers look out for people savage enough to have no religion, others, with the author of the *System of Nature*, (tom. 2. p. 6.) assure us, that the more savage a man is, the more apt he is to be superstitious, and to coin a religion for himself. Arbitrary assertions! Philosophical contradictions!

† It is the different manner of questioning, of examining those people, that occasions the different accounts given us by travellers of these matters. Ask certain hordes of savages whether they know God. They may possibly tell you they do not. But ask them if it be as praise-worthy in a man to kill his father, as to procure him a livelihood? what they think

(95) 2. But if those savages have themselves confirmed the testimony of the travellers, can we reject it? Do they not say that the famous deaf man of Chartres declared also that, before he was cured, he had no knowledge of God?

A. Though these savages had said all that is reported, there would still remain many things to be considered. 1. To give an account of a thought, of an inward feeling, the mind must have been deeply engaged in it; otherwise, it scarcely makes any impression on the memory. This is evident from our dreams, and from a thousand other things, that occupy a man's mind for an instant, and leave not the smallest trace on his brain. 2. A new way of learning a thing, will often make a man forget the way he learned the same thing before, and cause a notable alteration in the very notion of the thing. Thus the *Noctambuli* lose the idea of the objects that seem to occupy them in their night walks and operations, so soon as they come to see those objects with reflexion. Thus also the blind who have recovered their eye-sight, no longer distinguish certain objects by the hearing or the feeling. I knew a deaf woman, who
could

think of two men, one of whom dies endeavouring to save the life of his benefactor, and the other exerting himself to cut his benefactor's throat? You will not be long without discovering in them, notions of a being that rewards and punishes.

could make out the words that were spoken, by applying her hand to the speaker's throat, and lost this power when she recovered her hearing *. 3. The manner of answering of the savages, depends on the manner of questioning them. Travellers have been seen to ask them simply, *did they believe in God*, and content themselves with a negative answer. Perhaps it was only the name that was wanting, or perhaps the notion of the thing was not adapted to the capacity of those savages. They might have been asked, for instance, whether it would be well done of a man to kill his father, to drown his benefactor, to plunder his neighbour, &c. One might then ask, whether those actions, when privately done, remain without punishment, and the contrary actions, without reward. One might discover at last some ideas of Providence, of a God who rewards and punishes. The same reflections are applicable to the deaf man of Chartres; and might it not be suspected that the same disorder, that made him deaf and dumb, had also an effect on the organs of his reason? In short, neither the savages nor the idiots, nor the deaf and dumb born,

* A blind girl, who was cured at Vienna in 1776, who played superiorly on the harpsichord, could point to every thing and knew its name, lost these powers upon her recovery, and had every thing to learn over again.

born, form any exception in the general persuasions of men who reason, who enjoy their senses, their organs and their intellects.

(96) Q. Though it were true that some nations live without any knowledge of God, what would follow from thence in favour of Atheism?

A. Nothing at all, as I have already said. Do we think of cavilling against the general belief of a God, because a Spinoza, a Vanini, an Helvetius, and other madmen have attacked that tenet? And if, in an age of knowledge, when science is every where diffusing its light, the blindness of man can go so far, what may it not do in a country of savages? If there was any nation so degraded, so brutified by the stupidity consequent to great crimes, and to the absolute prevalence of gross, sensual passions, as to have lost every idea of its Lord and Maker, in such a state of dereliction, I should adore the depths of God's judgments, who, in his vengeance, punishes whole generations with so dreadful a blindness: but would never avail myself of that blindness to extinguish the light, nor of such astonishing, such incredible ignorance, to throw darkness over notions, the most certain and most evident.

(97) Q. From the unanimity of men in the belief of a God, are we to conclude that this idea is innate?

A. Since

A. Since reason is sufficient to give birth to this noble idea, since all nature contributes to create it within us, there is nothing that requires we should believe it innate*. But we ought not to reject with disdain the opinion of some Philosophers, who, considering the extent and power of certain ideas, thought the Creator had sowed, as it were, the seeds of them in our souls, where they found a peculiar facility to spring and grow up†.

(98) Q. From the difficulty that certain savages, though instructed by the missionaries, find to admit the idea of the true God, of his worship, of his laws, of his presence, &c. whilst all that is so easy to the children of Christians, is there not good grounds for supposing, that

* It is certain that many dispositions, that may be considered as seeds of ideas are transmitted by generation, and that we bring them with us to the world. Where is the absurdity in believing that the Creator has infused into the soul, some tincture of the most important ideas, such as that of his own existence? If the disciples of Malebranche maintain the opinion with too much earnestness, that is only from system-prejudice. But is it not another prejudice, to reject as mere imagination, an opinion that wants perhaps only some degrees more of strength in its proofs, to gain the approbation of men of sense? A modern author says, that man is naturally inclined and prompted to the belief and adoration of God, *by the immediate influence of God on his soul*, and considers this influence, as an inevitable connexion of the Creator, with the spiritual Being, that is the *breath* of his mouth.

† It is in this sense that Ecclesiasticus considered the fear of God, as born with the faithful servants of God. *Timer domini sum fidelibus in vulva concreat* est. Ecclus. I.

that the aptness to take those impressions is owing to the long series of back generations, on which these ideas were impressed, and farther concluding that it is not natural for man to occupy himself with these objects?

A. This observation, without entering into the merits of it, may be readily answered, and even retorted upon those who make an improper use of it. For, admitting the principle, an inference much more logical may be drawn, by saying, Since it is natural for man to occupy himself with objects so intimately connected with his reason and his happiness, and since history informs us, that in ancient times men did really occupy themselves with these objects; it follows, that a savage and brutish way of living during a long series of back generations, must have smothered the seeds of the noblest and most comfortable ideas, or, if you will, the aptness and facility to produce and relish them. See above n. 93.



SECTION II.

(99) Q. Is it fact, that the Jews had not a proper idea of God? and that they denied in particular his spirituality and his immensity?

A. The

A The grandest ideas, the most sublime and most affecting sentiments relative to the Deity, are to be found in the books of the Jews. It is there our poets and orators go to look for them. His existence fills heaven and earth: He is present every where: He is in all things, and all things are in him*. The Scripture is full of such like expressions; and one must be strangely beside himself not to see in these expressions, a Being clear of matter and extension. If God appeared to the Jews under corporeal emblems, never did they imagine that under these emblems they saw the nature of their God, who, they knew, was invisible and imperceptible to all the senses; for, invisibility is a necessary consequence of that immensity, so clearly expressed by the Jewish writers. When Jacob said, *I knew not that the Lord was in this place*, he was persuaded that the Lord did not manifest himself by an extraordinary exertion of his power in places where his name was not known; he is surprised at his appearing to him in the midst of the land of Chanaan, and cries out: The Lord is then known and adored in this

* *Cælum et Terram ego impleo.* Jerem. 23.—*Pluit Dominus in cujus conspectu sto.* 3. reg. 18.—*Si ascendero in cælum, tu illic es; si descendero in infernum, ades. Si sumpsero pennas meas diluculo, et habitavero in extremis maris, et enim illic manus tua deducet me, &c.* Pl. 138.—*Cælum et Cæli cælorum te non capiunt.* 2. Par. 6.—*In ipso enim vivimus, movemur, et sumus.* Act. 17.

this country, and I knew it not *. A thousand times have the objections of the unbelievers on this subject been answered. If they have courage enough still to bring them on, we have not enough to discuss them any further.

SECTION III.

(100) Q. Do not Christians seem to refuse God Prescience, by establishing the doctrine of free-will? For, prescience supposes certainty, and certainty brings on necessity.

A. This observation, on which Bayle and Voltaire lay so much stress, is but a quibble in the main†. The reason they alledge is a palpable falsehood. It is false that certainty brings on necessity. Though there were no Prescience, this proposition, *Peter will be just*, would be still most certainly true or false, because it would be still most certainly true that Peter will be just, or that Peter will not be just. In
this

* *Pere Dominus est in loco isto, et ego nesciebam.* Gen. 28. The Scripture makes use of a similar expression, to signify that God had not as yet spoken to Samuel. *Porro Samuel necdum sciebat Dominum.* 1. Reg. 3.

† All the objections against the science and prescience of God, to which the unbelievers annex the merit of novelty, are very old and very threadbare. *Et dixerunt, Quomodo scit deus, et si est scientia in excelsis?* Psalm 72.

this supposition, from whence would arise for Peter the necessity of being or not being just? Prescience just sees the future object; does not meddle with it: changes nothing in it. The thing, it is supposed, will, or will not happen, before God makes use of his prescience to know it. All things are represented in his intellect, as visible objects are in a mirror: the mirror presupposes the existence of the objects. The divine intellect, in like manner, presupposes the free determination of the creature, and consequently the creature's free will is not in danger. It is not because God foresees it, that Peter will be just; but God foresees that Peter will be just, because he really will be so.

(101) Q. How can God foresee a thing that exists not as yet in any determinate cause, and concerning which there is nothing decreed?

A. 1. When two truths, such as these: *The knowledge of God is infinite: Man has Free-Will*, are in an equal degree of evidence, what else have we to do but to believe them? It is only the ignorance we are in of the main link that joins them, that alarms our mind at the incompatibility it fancies it discovers between them. "We must then," as Bossuet says admirably well, "keep a fast hold of both ends of the chain, though we do not see the middle

“ middle part, where the connexion runs on*.”

2. It is folly to attempt explaining the use and the extent of an infinite knowledge, that embraces all times, to which the past is still present and the future is already come. We do not comprehend how we ourselves see the present, how we remember the past, how our soul darts into the time to come: and shall we attempt to explain how God foresees what is to pass in free souls that he has created, and whose every situation and disposition he knows, both past, present, future and possible? How does God know past things? These things no more exist at this day, than those that are to come an hundred thousand years hence. They are neither more real, nor more present, nor more within the ken of observation, than what is laid up deepest in the womb of futurity. Voltaire himself allows the propriety of these observations. “ Free-will,” says he,

Metaph.
Ch. 4.

“ being once established, it is not for us to determine, how God foresees what we will do
VOL. I. I “ freely.

* Though the unbelievers should attack Religion with difficulties absolutely insoluble, her truths, being once demonstrated, would for ever remain so. To destroy falsehood under every form it may assume, would require a knowledge, in some measure infinite. But plain common sense is sufficient for one to possess himself of a truth that is clearly proved. *Falsehood* (says very justly, J. J. Rousseau,) *admits of endless combinations; but truth has but one manner of being.*

“ freely. We know not in what manner God
 “ sees what passes: we have no idea of his way
 “ of seeing: why should we have any of his
 “ way of foreseeing?” All we know, is that
 the Creator acts upon naught, as well as upon
 what exists: that he calls what is not, as well
 as what is. He can then summon to his pre-
 sence *the freest* as well as the most *necef-*
sary things that futurity contains. Future
 things in short, to make use of the school
 term, form an *objective truth*, and therefore
 can not be unknown to the divine essence,
 to that essence, that necessarily represents all
 that is real, and all that is a truth*. It is
 worth remarking that while some Philosophers
 hesitate to allow God the prescience of free ac-
 tions, others have been found who granted it
 to men. Maupertuis assures us, it is as easy to
 see into the time to come, as into the time past:
 that predictions are of the same nature with
 reminiscence: that every body may be a Pro-
 phet: that it depends only on a degree more of
 activity in the mind, and that it is only giving
 a little more elevation to the soul. *See his Let-*
ters.

SECTION

* This matter is handled with all the perspicuity it admits
 of in the learned work of the Abbé Para, entitled, *Theorie*
des Etres insensibles, tom. 2. n. 1008.

SECTION IV.

(102) Q. IS not the Idea, that all nations have of God's attributes, contradicted by the evils that desolate the earth? Has not the impossibility of reconciling these things, given rise to the heresy of *the two principles*?

A. We shall answer this in the very words of a great champion of Manicheism, ever hostile to Religion, but not ever consistent with himself. If the system of the two principles be realized any where, it is in his writings.

" The surest and clearest notions of order teach
 " us, that a self-existing, necessary, Eternal
 " Being must be One, Infinite, Almighty, and
 " endued with every perfection. Agreeable to
 " these ideas, there can be nothing more ab-
 " surd than the hypothesis of the two princi-
 " ples..... When the Manicheans alledge
 " that, since we see in the world many things
 " that clash with one another, there must be
 " of course two principles, they only cause us
 " to shrug our shoulders. The opposition that
 " exists between those beings, however satis-
 " fied by what they call variations, disorder,
 " irregularity of nature, can not amount to half
 " an objection against the unity of God. All

Diiclion.
 Hist. &
 Crit. Art.
Manicheans.
 note. (d)

“ these things are accounted for either by the
 “ various powers that God has given to bodies,
 “ or by the interference of occasional, intelli-
 “ gent causes, whereby God has been pleased
 “ to regulate himself.” Voltaire, who copies
 Bayle, speaks of Manicheism pro and con,
 like his master. “ The word *good*,” says he,
 “ and that of *well being*, is equivocal. What
 “ is bad for you, is good in the general ar-
 “ rangement. The idea of an Infinite Being,
 “ Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, does
 “ not shock your reason. Will you deny a
 “ God, because you had a fit of the ague?
 “ He owed me, you’ll say, a well being. What
 “ is your reason for thinking so? For what
 “ did he owe you that well-being? What co-
 “ venant did he make with you? All you want
 “ then, to acknowledge a God, is to be happy
 “ in life? You, who cannot be perfect in any
 “ thing, what pretension can you have to be
 “ perfectly happy? But suppose that in an
 “ hundred years of continual happiness, you
 “ had one touch of the head-ach: will a mo-
 “ ment’s pain make you forget your Creator?
 “ Not, in all likelihood. If then a quarter of
 “ an hour’s pain does not stop you, why should
 “ two hours? Why should a day? Why
 “ should a twelvemonth of anguish make you
 “ reject

“ reject the idea of a supreme and universal agent?”

(103) Q. Is not the origin of evil one of the greatest difficulties of which the Atheists have availed themselves?

A. Yes; and we can not deny but the difficulty is plausible. But, were it absolutely unanswerable, what would be the consequence. In matters of such magnitude, we cannot engage to resolve every thing. It is enough, as *Supra. n. 101.* we have already observed, that a truth be established by the most convincing proofs: One need not trouble himself for every difficulty that may be started. Otherwise, how many truths, geometrically demonstrated, would remain uncertain! As to the objections arising from the origin of evil, whether physical or moral, they vanish of themselves, when, laying aside prejudice, we attend to the following considerations:

1. God is not obliged to do all the good he can: it would be even absurd to suppose it. Though infinitely good and powerful, he could, consistent with his power and goodness, produce beings more or less perfect: he could vary their degrees of perfection; and once there is more or less in the case, there must be failings and imperfections, at least relative ones. To say

say that God could not create an imperfect being, would be affirming he could^d produce nothing limited: that he was obliged to carry the perfection of his works beyond all bounds: that they are not worthy their Maker, if not as perfect as himself. What an absurdity! Every created being is limited, and every thing limited is imperfect.

2. To determine whether evil be a gift fit for God to bestow, one must consider whether it be an evil unmixed with any good. If in some respects it be good, although it might become evil by our fault, it follows only that it is a limited good: a good that might be greater. But it does not follow that it is a pure evil, a gift incompatible with God's goodness; since his gifts are necessarily limited.

3. All that the Manichean Philosophers tell us of moral evil amounts to this. They say that men, divesting themselves entirely of free-will, must become automaton: that God is obliged to reward forced virtues: to rule mankind, like a blind, careless, weak, silly master: that his justice, his wisdom, his power, all his attributes are lost in his goodness. God, according to them, is not just; he is only good; and his goodness is but a mere *goodness*, if I may be allowed the expression, an indifference, intolerable

intolerable in a Law-maker, an insensibility ill becoming the Lord and Master of the world*.

(104) Q. Is not Free-will a fatal gift, comparable to a knife that a father would put in the hand of a frantick child?

A. Is it not a kind of phrensy to compare free-will with phrensy? There is room to doubt, whether Bayle and Voltaire were in their senses, when they reasoned in such a manner. 1. Has a frantic person any command of himself? Can deliberation and reflexion have any share in what he does? A free-will is enlightened by a sound understanding, whose dictates it can obey: passion indeed may contend with it for the mastery of itself: but passion can not get the better of it, without its own determination. 2. A sword in the hands of a madman can do no good; whereas free-will is the source of every virtue, of merited rewards, of an homage worthy the majesty of God. 3. A father can not be always along with his son, to direct the use he is to make of the

* Thus it is that bad reasoners among the Christians, though not stupid in as high a degree as the Idolaters, have, like the latter, degraded the most essential attributes and properties of the immutable Deity, under pretence of moderation, mildness and good sense. *Dicentes se esse sapientes, stulti facti sunt, et mutaverunt gloriam incorruptibilis Dei.* Rom. 1.

the sword, nor to give him in all places assistance proportioned to the risk he runs from the fatal weapon; whereas our free-will is never without the help of heavenly inspirations and divine grace. We should never have done, were we to pursue the comparison through all the points, in which it is defective.

(105) Q. Would a father be considered as a good father, who did not do his children all the good, and protect them from all the evil he could?

A. All the comparisons between God, and a Father, a Guardian, a Physician, a Master, a Sovereign, &c. are lame. 1. God requires a free homage, any other is beneath his notice. 2. A Father is but a Father, whereas God is at once a Father, a Judge, a Rewarder, a Sovereign Master, &c. a particular and a general cause. He is bound to answer all these qualities. 3. There is a contradiction in saying, that God does, or ought to do, all the good he can, since that, as we have already said, would be doing what is infinite. Bayle himself declares, " He does not admit as a standard of the goodness and sanctity of God, the ideas that we have of goodness and sanctity in general: that our natural ideas can not serve as a common measure to estimate divine goodness and sanctity, " and

Bayle's
works, tom.
2. p. 297,
& 998.

“ and human goodness and sanctity : that, as
 “ there is no proportion between finite and
 “ infinite, we must not think of measuring
 “ with the same all the conduct of God, and
 “ the conduct of men ; and therefore that
 “ what would be incompatible with the good-
 “ ness and sanctity of man, may be compatible
 “ with the goodness and sanctity of God,
 “ though our weak understanding may not be
 “ able to perceive this compatibility.”

(106) Q. Would it not have been very happy for man to be compelled to merit Heaven ?

A. *Compelled to merit* is an absurdity. When our Philosophers put such expressions together, they will excuse our telling them, they know not what they say.

(107) Q. If God can prevent evil, and will not, where is his goodness ? If he will, and can not, where is his omnipotence ? Voltaire thinks this dilemma unanswerable.

A. We have already answered it as fully as it required. God can prevent evil, but will not, for reasons becoming his wisdom and justice, and consistent with his sanctity as well as his goodness.

(108) Q. How is it possible the permitting of sin should not prejudice the attributes of God ?

A. What attribute of God can this permission prejudice? 1. The permitting of sin does not hurt God's justice; because the object of justice is to reward virtue and punish vice.

Emile. tom. 3. P. 77. "Providence," says a Philosopher, "does not will the evil that man does, by abusing the free-will it gave him; but it does not prevent him from doing it. It made him free, that he might do from choice, not evil, but good. The justice of man consists in giving every one his own, and the justice of God, in calling every one to an account for what he commanded him to do." 2. This permission does not hurt the wisdom of God; because the real beauty of the moral world consists in man's embracing virtue from preference, from liking, from choice, and freely; which he could not do, if sin was not permitted. 3. It does not hurt the goodness of God, which consists in willing and doing good. Now, the permission of sin is not contrary to God's good will, it puts no stop to his kindness, never prevents man from receiving his benefits. 4. It hurts not his sanctity; because it is only the will of sinning or the act, that can really hurt it; and the noblest homage that can be paid to his sanctity, is to resist the power of sinning. Besides, there is nothing that gives us
a more

a more exalted notion of God's attributes than the permitting of sin. What can make us more sensible of his infinite sanctity, than the manner he has required that sin should be atoned for; or of his justice, than the rigour with which he punishes it; or of his magnificence and liberality, than the rewards with which he crowns those who have triumphed over the propensity to sin? If then we consider sin on the side of the divine attributes, we see that God was not obliged to prevent it.

(109) Q. Is not the success of wickedness, and the oppression of virtue upon earth a real perturbation, a sheer evil without any mixture of good?

A. Yes; in the system of the Atheist, who does not look forward to the time when all things will be set to rights.

(110) Q. If God reserves his rewards and punishments for the time to come, is he not guilty at least of a temporary injustice?

A. 1. If God rewarded virtue and punished vice upon the spot, he would deprive sinners of the means of doing penance, and the righteous of the merit of persevering in virtue, notwithstanding its trials. 2. If he always exercised his justice in this life, he would deprive us of one of the strongest arguments we have

to

Infra. n.
185.

to prove the immortality of the soul. 3. Man would become servile and mercenary: he would shun evil from the sole fear of imminent punishment, and practise virtue from the sole desire of a temporary reward he could not fail of. 4. Patience, humility, mortification, the forgiveness of injuries, hope in God, disengagement of the heart from worldly things, with many other virtues, spring, grow up and flourish in adversity. By putting an end to all injustice, to all kind of misery and oppression, God would withdraw from us the surest means of sanctification and salvation. 5. It often happens that an action seemingly virtuous, deserves really to be punished, because performed from a vicious motive; oftentimes also a misdeed, that seems to deserve the severest punishment, is pardonable, because committed from surprise or mistake. Now to prevent murmuring, and to humour the delusive notions of men, God would be obliged to commit injustice, by rewarding a virtue of mere show, and punishing severely a venial surprize. 6. The sufferings of the just are frequently the consequence of general calamity: and must God be continually working miracles to procure them a situation different from other folks?

(111) Q. What

(111) Q. What is to be done in order to give additional weight to the reasons that Christians alledge to reconcile the attributes of God with the existence of evil?

A. It is enough to expose the absurdity of the contrary systems.

(112) Q. Which are these?

A. Manicheism and Fatalism. Manicheism is, at the very first sight, a heap of absurdities and ridiculous imaginations. 1. It is the idea of a noxious, malefick principle, coeternal with God, and independent of him, capable of impeding his omnipotence, his beneficence, and all the views and designs of his wisdom. This malefick being is self-existing, and thereby, alone equal to God. But, with that supreme perfection, how comes it to have no attributes, but such as are mischievous and detestable? Existing necessarily, and of itself, like God, how comes it to be of a nature diametrically opposite to that of God?

2. How can this world, where we see so much order, such wonderful harmony prevailing; where all things are so well connected, and the hand of divine wisdom so visible on all sides, how, I say, can this world be an effect of the conflict and opposition of two inimical principles, whereof the one can never agree with the other,

other, and seeks only to destroy what the other does; principles equally powerful, the one to establish order, and the other to destroy it every where? How can this order, this harmony, those shining traces of wisdom be nothing but the result of the struggles of these two principles acting in opposition to each other?

3. On what grounds is it asserted that matter is essentially bad; that a substance with extension and compounded of parts, is a principle of evil? When we see the services, the numberless comforts arising to us from matter, which man indeed may sometimes abuse, but of which he may also make a proper use, and may sanctify by his gratitude to the Creator, must not our reason convince us of the extravagance of the Manichean doctrine, which represents matter as the born enemy of wisdom and virtue?

4. If I cast my eyes on the beings visible upon earth from the insect to the elephant, I see that all is made with design, and proclaims the boundless wisdom of the Maker; that every thing has its use, and witnesses the most attentive kindness; that all informs me of the inexhaustible fecundity of divine omnipotence, and fills me with admiration. If at times those visible beings occasion some physical evil, the reason and understanding given to man supply him
with

with means to escape the evil, or to remedy it; and besides, what are those physical evils compared with the benefits attending them, the services they render, and the virtues they occasion?

5. If man follows the impulse of two opposite, inimical principles, he is no more laudable for doing good, nor blameable for doing evil, than a stone is laudable or blameable, when, left to its own weight, it falls, and tends to the centre of the earth. For what there is in him of the bad principle must necessarily do evil; and what there is in him of the good principle must necessarily do good. He must necessarily remain passive between these two powers. Yet man is apt to repent. He is conscious he does ill, because it is his will to do it, and because he freely misuses his faculties. If the habit is violent, and nearly insurmountable, he is fully sensible, that comes from the repeated abuse he has made of his free-will. It is then false, that man is actuated and led by two conflicting principles; and his own experience convinces him thoroughly that the Manichean hypothesis is of all absurdities the most extravagant. To conceive a true notion of Bayle, it is only to consider, that it was in favour of this curious hypothesis that he exerted
all

all the powers of his génius*. Let us oppose his sophisms with an argument from an Hea-then Philosopher. "The intention of nature," says Chrysippus, in his Treatise on Providence, "was not to render men liable to diseases, " which would ill become the cause of all good ; " but if, from the general plan of the world, " which is very wisely laid and for the best of " purposes, there should result some inconve- " niences, it is because they came at the heel " of the work, without being included in the " original design, and in the main object of " Providence. For instance, when nature " formed the human body, the utility and " excellence of the work required that the " head should be composed of a texture of " thin, delicate bones: but from thence re- " sulted the inconvenience of not being able " to bear heavy blows. The case is the same " with regard to virtue. The direct action of " nature tends to it, and produces it: but at the

* In order to know this famous Sceptick, who may be considered as the commander in chief of the unbelievers, see the different characters that have been given of him by Ramsay, Crusaz, Le Clerc, the Author of an excellent *Discourse on the danger of eminent abilities when they are not guided by wisdom*, The Author of the *Lett. on the English and French*: Do. of the *Essays on Philosophers*. Saurin, *Serm.* 3. vol. Poree, *Orat. De Credul. in Doct. F. Neuville. Serm. on Scandal, &c. &c. Lett. Crit. Sur Bayle a la Haye.* 1732. *Exam. Crit. des Ouvrages de Bayle*, 1747. *La Relig. Vengée, par une Société de Gens de Lettres, six premiers Tomes.*

“ the same time, by a kind of repercussion,
 “ or counter-effect, it produces the source of
 “ vice.” A Heathen could say nothing more
 rational, particularly in his ignorance of the fall
 of the first man. Malebranche has cleared up
 and explained Chrysippus’s principle. There are
 excellent reflexions against the sophisms of
 Bayle, in an English work of Mr. Hutcheson’s
 entitled, *a System of Moral Philosophy*, that ap-
 peared in French in 1770. tom. 1. p. 314, 320,
 &c. &c.

(113) Q. Is Fatalism more rational than
 Manicheism?

A. Fatalism is an evident consequence of
 Atheism, and quite as unreasonable. Here is a
 remark of one, who has made himself the pa-
 negyrist of every error, and particularly of this :
 “ You do not think that God is good, because
 “ there is evil upon earth : but would necessity,
 “ supposing it substituted to a Supreme Being,
 “ be any thing better ? In the system that ad-
 “ mits of a God, there are only difficulties to
 “ get over : but in all other systems there are
 “ absurdities to swallow.” So then, according
 to Voltaire, there are only *difficulties* on our
 side ; but on that of the Atheists there are
absurdities ; and the same, or near the matter,
 may be said of the Manicheans, in favour
 of

of whom he has struck in with Bayle. But there are a few observations to be made.

1. That we have good answers to these difficulties, while our adversaries are reduced to swallow in silence their own *absurdities*, or to answer them only with other absurdities.
2. That we have strong reasons not to let ourselves be imposed upon by those difficulties, because our principles being clearly proved and incontestable, the difficulties must yield to the principles, not the principles to the difficulties.
3. That we speak from the dictates of faith, and the tenets of a divine religion, demonstrated such by arguments unanswerable, while the Fatalists and Manicheans have nothing to vouch for them, but their own imagination and the delirium of Philosophy.
4. If after all our answers to the objections from the existence of evil, there still remains any darkness to dispel; if the power and violence of the passions is still astonishing; if moral and physical evil still appear too widely diffused; the doctrine of original sin, and the general depravation it has brought upon all nature, will throw some light on the mystery; for a mystery it is: but a mystery well proved, as we shall make it appear; and this mystery once established, will account for many others, which otherwise could not be accounted for.

B. 4. Ch. 5.
Art. 5.

SECTION

SECTION V.

(114) 2. FROM these reflexions on Providence, and the attributes of God, can it be inferred that all is right, and that the system of Optimism may be adopted?

A. 1. There is no denying but all is right on the side of God; because God can do no wrong, though he may increase the good he does, and improve it without end.

2. With regard to man, considered in this life, and abstracting from his hopes of a life to come, it is certain that all is not right; and it would be insulting his miseries to tell him the contrary.

3. Optimism, which, in the sense of its partisans, is but a mere metaphysical nicety, the offspring of an imagination rather gay than regular, is in some measure realised in the person of the just man, whose virtues brighten in adversity, and with whom the hope of future happiness is always a solace to present distress. In either fortune he enjoys in peace both his God and himself: he enjoys with rapture all the comforts of nature: without fear or envy he enjoys all the good he finds in others: without bitterness or resentment he bears with such failings

failings of theirs, as he cannot amend : to all he sees, he lends the most favourable light : he improves, he embellishes all that he touches : he knows it is in adversity that God has sown the seeds of happiness for his children : the sentiments of peace, patience, consolation and hope that accompany this knowledge render even this life for him a life of delight. The chaff is separated from the grain under the thresher's hand : The oil runs clear from under the mill-stone, that broke the kernel with its integuments : the same hand, that lays heavy on the just man, tries and purifies him, while the sinner falls from despair, into never ending misery*.

CHAPTER

* *Creatura enim tibi factori deserviens, exardescit in tormentum adversus injustos, et lenior fit ad benefaciendum his qui in te confidunt. Sap. 16.—Diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum. Rom. 8.—Una eademque vis irruens, bonos probat, purificat, eliquat; malos vastat, damnat, exterminat. Augustinus.*

CHAPTER IV.

Misery of the Atheist.

SECTION I.

(115) 2. **THOUGH** Atheism can not stand the light of reason, might it not find its account in dealing with the foibles of the human heart?

A. If man could confine himself to look for impunity in guilt, to place his felicity in the enjoyment of a few fleeting pleasures, contenting himself with that share of happiness that is dealt out to brutes, he might view Atheism without horror. But a soul capable of extending her desires, of raising her pretensions, of setting a value on lasting felicity, of soaring in thought up to what is eternal, of animating nature by her looks, and there discovering the hand of an omnipotent Artist, can see nothing in the Atheist's opinion but desolation and despair. Without such a view, all nature is for her one heap of confusion, waiting only for annihilation. She not only looks back on herself with contempt and sorrow, as upon an atom
tossed

tossed about by a blind fortuitous impulse, but the whole world is to her but a frightful chaos, without spring, or connexion, or design, or attraction*.

(116) 2. How could a truth so remarkable as this, and so independent of all reasoning, escape the notice of some Philosophers?

A. It did not escape their notice; but they lent a deaf ear to it, that they might not yield to its impression, which they considered as a pleasing error, as a charming illusion, and thought fit to set up in the stead of it, the melancholy ideas of chance and naught. "The theatre of Nature", says J. J. Rousseau, "so full of life, so animated for those who acknowledge a God, is dead to the Atheist's eye; and, in that great harmony of beings, where all with so docile a voice proclaim a God, he perceives nothing but a dead, eternal silence" It is here one may say with an

*Delectasti me
Domine, in
factura tuâ:
et in operibus
manuum tua-
rum exulta-
bo.*

*Vir insipiens
non cognoscet,
fultus non
intelliget hæc.
Psal. 92.*

ancient Poet:

*Non umbra aliorum nemorum, non mollia possunt
Prata movere animum; non qui per saxa volutus,
Purior electro campum petit amnis 3. Georg.*

It

* Every sublime thought, every great and generous sentiment springs from the idea of a God, of a Providence, of immortality. The Atheist's books, with all that Philosophy can do to render them fashionable, are cold, melancholy performances. They rise only when they borrow the language, that confutes their errors. *Firmamentum virtutis exaltans animam.* Eccclus. 34.

It is the idea of a God, that embellishes the whole world, and renders interesting all it contains. It is this idea that gives speech to the insensible beings, that interrupts the silence of the woods, that communicates harmony to the purling streams, that enraptures at the sight of a flower, that elevates at the sound of music, that charms at the rural concert of the birds. "How many comforts," says again the Genevian Philosopher, "is he not deprived of, " who has no Religion! What thought can " he have to solace his affliction? What witness " to encourage him in his private good actions, " what friendly voice to whisper him at the " bottom of his heart? What reward of virtue " has he to expect? With what resolution can " he encounter death?" A modern writer, a sensible, moderate man, thought it neither an exaggeration, nor a paradox, to take the Atheist out of the class of rational beings, and to rank him with those whom nature has endowed with sensation only*. The Atheists allow their

* " It has been attempted, says he, to represent the Atheist " as a sage, *with whom upon the extinction of faith, reason is* " *become omnipotent* (New Philosophical Thoughts): would it " not be better to define him, a man over whom both reason and " faith have lost all their power? Will it not even be too much " for him, to be allowed a place in the class of human beings? " Like us, I know, he raises his looks towards heaven; but, like

their system is dispiriting, that it can suit none but such as have a large stock of ill-humour, a con-

“ like the brute, whose eyes are fixed on the earth, he can
 “ discover no connexion between it and the Supreme Being.
 “ Heaven has given him that sublime countenance that bespeaks
 “ intellect, and perhaps he was made, like man, to possess it
 “ to a certain degree: but, like the brute, he no where can
 “ perceive any traces of it. With the faculty of thinking,
 “ he received at his birth, privileges far superior to that of
 “ instinct: but is it not the animal senses alone that he takes
 “ for his guides? Like man, in short, he enjoys the gift of
 “ speech; but, like the brutes, he either never examined na-
 “ ture, or nature never answered him.”——“ The sun may
 “ go on illumining the world, and rolling from East to West
 “ his refulgent orb: to the brightness of day, may succeed
 “ the sable majesty of night, ushered in by thousands of ra-
 “ dian stars, hailing with jubilee the greatness of their
 “ Maker; the Atheist is deaf to the heavenly concert, though
 “ sounding from end to end of the glorious march: Millions
 “ of living creatures may people our woods and lawns, may
 “ soar into the region of the air, may breathe in the ocean’s
 “ deep gulfs, and perpetuate their various species from age to
 “ age: never will they be able to raise his thoughts to the
 “ author of life. The constant and regular return of the
 “ winter frosts and vernal blooms, of glowing summers, and
 “ mild maturing autumns, announce to mankind, the God of
 “ wisdom and providence; but order and regularity tells him
 “ no more than chaos and confusion. Earth may renew her
 “ clothing: she may dress herself out in her richest attire: he
 “ will gather her fruits, and ascribe them to chance. Insen-
 “ sible in the midst of the great theatre of the universe, he
 “ never will hear that potent voice, that cries out so distinctly:
 “ *It is God that made us.* Even his heart will not hint it to
 “ him. Is he then that being that was destined to contem-
 “ plate nature? Is he, while his heart is begirt with ice, and
 “ his mind passied with the apathy of stupidity, is he, I say,
 “ qualified to judge of the order, the variety, the riches of
 “ all kinds she displays to his view; and by the beauty, the
 “ magnificence, and the aggregate of the work, to raise his
 “ thoughts to the power and wisdom of its Author?

*Ipsæ fecit
 nos, et non
 ipsi nos.*

a constitution inclined to melancholy, a mind soured by misfortunes or infirmities. It has been observed of the rough thorny Spinosa, that he was of a dull cheerless cast; gloomy, pen-
 five and misanthropick in the extreme. All the horrors of vice, and all the features of despair, were visible in the face of the famous Atheist Dolet*: Vanini's visage was not more engaging. A man no less remarkable for his wit, than for his attachment to Christianity, used to say, this system could suit those only, who were in love with death, and applied to the enemies of the Deity those words of Solomon: *Omnes qui me oderunt, diligunt mortem.* Bayle, D'Alembert, Hume, &c. observe that the Atheist Sages (if there can be any such) take special care not to publish their thoughts. Bayle says that, "from a motive of charity and generosity, they would rather strengthen youth in the doctrines that may preserve them from debauchery, administering comfort to their disci-
 ples, and the hope of an happy eternity†.

Syst. of Nature, tom. 2. Shaftsbury, *Lett. on Enthusiasm.* Sect. 3.

Prov. 2.

Diction. Crit. art. Desbarreaux.

VOL. I.

K

There

* "The very sight of him, says one of his contemporaries, (John Angeodonus) was enough to pronounce him a fool, a phrenetick, a downright madman. Neither the brass, nor the canvas could be, in as high a degree as his face, the image of a monster."

† Did Bayle, I wonder, practise himself this pompous maxim? It would be a matter of curiosity to know who those mighty *charitable* and mighty *generous* unbelievers are.
 One

There are many from whom you might as well snatch a portion of themselves, deprive them of their daily food, plunge them in the void, and force their uneasy minds to perish for want of exercise, as take away from them their ideas of God.*

(117) Q. Do not the Atheists find a great advantage in being freed from the fear of death, and its consequences?

A. 1. If they have not the agitations of fear, neither have they the comforts of hope, which
in

One would be tempted to think those gentlemen sacrifice their most profound reflexions, and most valuable discoveries to the simplicity of believers. But we know how that is.

* What wonder a man should grow sick of himself, in the void he must experience upon losing the grand, energetick idea of God? Of that Being he considered as present in all places and at all times, as the witness of his actions and most secret thoughts, as the friend of his heart, as the author and insurer of his felicity both here and hereafter. Hence those dissipations, which irksomeness invents in such rapid succession, none of which he finds capable of relieving his disgust; hence that rage for gaming, dancing, racing, and the play-house, which goes on encreasing in proportion, as it despairs of being gratified. But ah! what idea could make amends for that of God: an idea so vast in itself, and so rich, that begets and fosters so many others, that of duty, that of justice, that of charity! And what shall we say of the great, the exalted sentiments that flow from those ideas; the voice of conscience, the study of the law of God, the knowledge in detail, and upon principle, of his commandments, and the precepts of his church, of the many obligations of a good christian, of the pious practices that occupy the soul, and, with unction ineffable, render it happy in every situation of life. Heavens! what a void must not the loss of all this leave behind it in the soul and the life of man! And is it not quite natural we should become triflers and fools in the same proportion as we become irreligious?

in the just man is always uppermost, and gives him a foretaste of future happiness.

2. Has not the sight of annihilation wherewithal to make them shudder with horror? Is it more comfortable to be annihilated, than to be judged by the God of wisdom, justice and mercy? But let us hear the Philosophers. Merian. Hist. of the Prussian Academy, t. 19.

“ Would the instinct, that causes one to shudder at the sight of death, leave a man quiet at the approach of his total destruction? “ We are in the habits of living, of feeling, of being something. It is not without painful struggles that one can bring himself to part with himself, and say: *Thou must die, the whole of thee must die* Those are melancholy doubts . . . hope for life How could you reject an opinion so comfortable, and so necessary to mankind?” He that believes his soul immortal, finds in that persuasion a sure remedy for all the evils of life, and wherewithal to season every rational pleasure. Every regret, every desire is lost in that grand idea, which alone includes all the praises of the Eternal, and every motive for loving him. The Author of the *System of Nature* tells us this is the idea of enthusiasts, but adds that these enthusiasts are happy. Volt. Dict. Philos. art. Chine. Catechisme Chinois. 3. Entretien. *Immortalitatis pulchrum est medicamentum . . . pulcher hymnus Dei homo immortalis.* Clem. Alex.

(118) 2. Must not the fear of God, that enemy to wickedness, and so dreadful in his vengeance, disturb man's peace and afflict him with cruel anxieties about futurity?

A. It can disturb only the wicked man; and that fear, which is so useful to society and to public safety, is very fit to reclaim himself and to save him. In the virtuous man, the fear of God is quiet and gentle; it lies between hope and love; it is a fear that encourages, that fortifies more than all the hopes in this world, that banishes every other fear*, that sets a man above every danger, that guards him against every seduction, and renders him greater than all that is praised and admired by mankind†.

SECTION

* Since God is the master and sovereign arbiter of all that man can fear, all other fears must necessarily vanish in the fear of God. *Qui timet Dominum nihil trepidabit, et non pavebit, quoniam ipse est spes ejus, Ecclus. 34.—Auferendique sunt metus, sed ita ut is solus relinquatur, qui, quoniam legitimus et verus est, solus efficit ut possint cetera omnia non timeri. Laër. lib. 6. De verò cultu n. 1, 7.*—A modern poet has finely expressed this precious advantage of the fear of God.

I fear God, my dear Abner, and fear nothing else.—Racine.

† *Magnus et Judex et Potens est in honore, et non est major illo qui timet Deum. Eccli. 10. Facultates et virtutes exaltant eum, et super hæc timor Domini. Ibid. 40.*

SECTION II.

(119) Q. What are we to think of suicide, now grown so common? can it be considered as a consequence of incredulity, and of the havoc it makes among souls?

A. There can be no doubt of it. In the system of the Atheist, nothing but death can put an end to his miseries. The Christian is never without resources: even his misfortunes add to his hopes, and the law of his God is to him a never-failing source of consolation and life*. But the unbeliever falls into despair, when he sees himself become the victim of fatality, and the sport of every whim incident to blind matter.

*Sæculi autem
tristitia mor-
tem operatur*
2 Cor. 7.

(120) Q. Are not the pleasures of sense sufficient to attach a man to life, and to preserve him from the desire of destroying himself †.

A. Those

* *In æternum non obliviscar justificationes tuas, quia in ipsis vivificasti me.* Psal. 118.

† The author of *the Seasons*, and *the Three Poems*, tells us very gravely, that suicides are more common about the beginning of winter, because pleasures in that season are more scarce; that they should be reinforced with dances, entertainments, play-house amusements, &c. After that one may judge of the grand resources of Philosophy. She takes upon her to destroy prejudice, to reform religion, to make the happiness of nations: and she cannot stand the approach of Winter.—Is it possible that M. de S. Lambert should be to learn how little effect those noisy dissipations have on a soul

A. 1. Those pleasures are not sufficiently general to attach all ranks, all constitutions, all ages. Men bending ~~under the~~ weight of labour, of misfortune, of indigence, are utter strangers to them, and those are the persons that stand most in need of being reconciled with life. The comforts of religion and of Christian hope are within the reach of every body.

2. It is those very pleasures, which, by their continuance and excess, bring on a disgust of life. By dint of amusement people are no longer amused. The longer and the freer the enjoyment, the more apt it is to convince one of the inanity of all transitory satisfactions; and accordingly it is the sons of pleasure and debauchery, that are generally the most disgusted with

soul that is disturbed, disgusted and fallen into despair? Does he think the highest meats, the most exquisite cookery, the most delightful musick, can restore peace to a soul withered with debauchery and every other vice? A celebrated heathen poet thought quite otherwise:

*Disfrictus ensis cui super impiâ
Cervice pendet, non Sicula dapes
Dulcem elaborabunt saporem:
Non avium Citharæque cantus
Somnum reducent* Hor.

Another heathen tells us the same thing in a fiction expressive of a very great truth:

*. Epulæque ante ora paratæ
Regifico luxu: Furiarum maxima juxta
Accubat, et manibus prebilet contingere mensas,
Exurgitque facem attollens, atque intonat ore.*

Virg. vi. *Æneid.*

with life : a clear proof that this world has not wherewithal to satisfy the heart of man, which naturally tends to immortality, and that to deprive it of that high pretension, is only rendering it hateful to itself. The school of Epicurus, as Cardinal Polignac observes, has alone formed more suicides than all the others together*. Lucretius killed himself at the age of 42 ; Creech his English translator at 40 ; Blount at 39 ; the Materialist Acosta blew out his brains with a pistol, &c. Montagne and Helvetius, zealous sticklers for Epicurus, are the declared Panegyrist of suicide. *The System of Nature*† teaches in express terms that “ shame or
 Chap. 19.
 P. 305, 306.
 “ indigence,

* The only way to find always new pleasures, to relish them, and make them the pastime and refection of the soul, is to enjoy them according to the intention of God, to the rules of wisdom and moderation prescribed by the law of God. A French poet has handsomely expressed this observation. His lines may be translated thus :

“ Pleasures, are the flowers, which, among the brambles
 “ of this world, our divine master causes to spring for us.
 “ Each has its season, and, with prudent care, some may be
 “ preserved to the very winter of life. But if they must be
 “ pulled let it be with a sparing hand. Their transitory beauty is easily blasted. Labour is oftentimes the parent of pleasure. I pity him who is burthened with a load of leisure.
 “ Happiness is a blessing that Nature bestows not, but sells.
 “ Here no crop can be raised without cultivation.”

† “ With a sense of the Deity,” says the author of the *Studies of Nature*, “ all is great, all is noble, all is beautiful, and, even in the narrowest circumstances all is strong and invincible. Without it, all is feeble, and even in the midst of grandeur, all is bitter and unpleasant. Vainly does
 “ man

“ indigence, the perfidy of friends, the infidelity of a wife, the ingratitude of children, a passion that cannot be gratified, vexation, melancholy, despair, any thing, may become a justifiable motive for renouncing life. A dagger is the friend, the only comforter of the wretched; when nothing is left to keep up the love of existence, to live is then the greatest of evils; and to die, the duty of whoever wishes to get clear of them.”

(121) Q. Does it not follow from that, that the pretended courage of suicides is in reality nothing but weakness in the extreme, which cannot stand the sense of pain or of irksomeness?

A. That

“ man fence himself round with the gifts of fortune, once that sense leaves his heart, irksomeness takes possession of it. If the absence is long, from irksomeness he falls into lowness, from lowness into melancholy, from melancholy into despair; and when this state of anxiety is become permanent, he rushes into death. Of all the beings visible upon earth, he is the only that makes use of free will to destroy himself. Human life, with all its pomps and delights, ceases appearing life to him, when it ceases to be considered as immortal and divine.”

* *Pulchra voluptatis sanè folatia raptæ,
Præclarum auxilium, dolor additus ipse dolenti !
Sic miser Assyriûm regnator Sardana palus,
Post epulas, Venerem, levium et genus omne bonorum,
Languentis vitæ impatiens, ac sortis iniquæ,
Struxit in urbe rogam, seque et sua tradidit igni.
En Epicuræ dignissima meta Palestræ !* Antiluc. lib. I.

A. That is what a Philosopher, a great friend to Epicurus, allows in his translation of a passage in Virgil, on those heroes so famed for making away with themselves.

*Proxima deinde tenent masti loca, qui sibi lethum
Insontes peperere manu, lucemque perosi
Projecere animas; quàm vellent athere in alto
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros perferre labores!
Fata obstant; trisique palus inamabilis undâ
Alligat, et novies Styx interfusa coerct. Æneid. lib. vi.*

Là sont ces insensés, qui d'un bras téméraire,
Ont cherché dans la mort un secours volontaire;
Qui n'ont pu supporter, foibles et furieux,
Le fardeau de la vie imposé par les Dieux.
Helas! ils voudroient tous se rendre à la lumière,
Recommencer cent fois leur pénible carrière.
Ils regrettent la vie; ils pleurent, et le sort,
Le sort, pour les punir, les retient dans la mort.
L'abîme du Cocyte, et l'Acheron terrible
Met entr'eux et la vie un obstacle invincible.

Every man of sense among the heathens has spoken as Voltaire does in the above lines. It is not, says Seneca, by his hatred to life, that man shews the vigour of his soul, but by his struggles against misfortune, and his resolution never to yield to its attacks*. The poet Martial expresses the same thought in nearly the same words†. Cicero speaks with still greater energy, and with the greatest respect for the

K 5

Author

* *Non est virtus timere vitam, sed malis ingentibus
Obstare, ne se vertere ac retro dare.* Seneca in Thebaïde.

† *Rebus in angustiis facile est contemnere vitam:
Fortius ille facit, qui miser esse potest.*

Author of Life*. In short, the very comicks have cast a ridicule on this pretended self-destroying courage.

Aller en l'autre monde, est très grande sottise,
Tandis qu'en celui ci l'on peut être de mise. *Moliere.*

To plunge into the other world,
While here one may his corner keep,
Would madness be, stark staring madness.

All the civil laws of Europe, since it is become the most enlightened part of the world, concur in reprobating suicide, and stigmatizing it, as the effect of cowardly despair; and, till the commencement of this fine Philosophick age of ours, there were but few of those mad enthusiasts that took upon them to apologize for it. The laws of Athens punished the destroyer of himself, by ordering the right hand of the corpse to be burnt separately from the rest. In Thebes the body of a suicide was burnt with infamy. Montesquieu was mistaken, when he said the Roman laws did not condemn suicide. They direct that suicides shall be deprived of sacred and religious burial. In what nation could suicide

* *Nisi Deus, is, cujus templum est id omne quod conspicis, istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit, huc tibi patere aditus non potest. Piis omnibus retinendus est animus in custodia corporis, nec injussu ejus, a quo ille datus est ex, hominum vita migrandum est. Seneca. Scip. cap. 3.*—There is something very philosophical, and very true in the encomium the Church bestows on S. Martin: *O virum ineffabilem, qui nec mori timuit, nec vivere recusavit!*

suicide be considered with indifference and left unpunished? Is it not self-evident that the wretches possessed of this phrensy are of all men the most dangerous? What is he not capable of who is resolved on his own destruction? What crime can strike him with fear or abhorrence, if he finds it his interest or pleasure to commit it, before he absolutely and irrecoverably withdraws from the eyes and power of his fellow-creatures?

(122) Q. To justify themselves, those people tell us that life is an evil, and existence a sorry present from God. What are we to think of this apology?

A. 1. Though life were an evil, a little more fortitude would teach us to bear it; a little more religion would lighten the weight of it; a little more of the fear of God would keep us attached to it, till the time was come for us to be allowed to quit it. Oh! if the zeal of the ministers of the gospel, strongly and effectually supported by the ruling power, could revive morality, could abolish the brutal feelings, whereby souls are debased, degraded and estranged from themselves; could restore to religion the rights and the lustre she formerly had; if the firm hope of bright immortality were substituted to the gloomy dispiriting prospect of annihilation,

annihilation, people never would think of attempting their own lives. A courage actuated and supported by all the resources of divine faith would raise them above all the ravages of adversity, and the sorrows attending human infirmity, and would caution them against sending into the pretended regions of nought a soul, which, they know, must fall into the hands, and under the formidable vengeance of the Author of life, insulted in his bounty, and in the first prerogative of his sovereign dominion; they would know from the Apostle, that living and dying, they belong to the mighty King of all beings; and that these two epochs of our existence are entered on the great book of the Lord and Master of all time*.

2. Why should life be accounted an evil? It is only ingratitude and rebellion against God that can give birth to an idea refuted by the love that all mankind have for life, and their dread of being deprived of it. In the opinion of the Atheist, in which man is without resource, without hope, without destination, I might look upon existence as an evil: but, except the case of that monstrous supposition, creation is certainly the first of God's gifts, and the

* *Sive enim vivimus, Domino vivimus: sive morimur, Domino morimur. Sive ergo vivimus, sive morimur, Domini sumus.*
Rom. 14.

the foundation of all the rest. The pleasure alone of existing and thinking is a favour: the pure joy that a good action, a virtuous thought occasions: the delicate feelings that arise from an act of humanity, that a man has done or been witness to, the comforts of friendship, the link of social affections, the power of contributing to the happiness of a fellow creature, renders life dear to a well minded man. He feels himself under the hand of an attentive providence, lavish of its gifts; a moment's reflexion on the Supreme Being, fills him with the sweetest emotion, and makes him forget all the miseries inseparable from his nature.

"Can I then," concludes the Genevian Philosopher, "can I see myself so highly distinguished, and not feel happy at my filling this post of honour, and not bless the hand that appointed me to it? From my first reflexion on myself, there arises in my heart an emotion of gratitude, to bless the author of my species, and from that emotion, my first homage to the bountiful Deity."

Emile, t. 3.
p. 66.

3. While some Philosophers look upon creation as an evil, and life as a burden; others pretend that blind Nature is not to be blamed; that we have no reason to complain of her; and that there is more comfort under the fatality of her

her necessitating laws, than under the providence of a kind and liberal God.

(123) Q. Is it possible that a parallel so absurd, and followed by so senseless a preference, could come from a human being?

Tom. 2. p. 401. A. It is the doctrine of those who content themselves with what Plato calls *the supreme felicity of horses and bulls*. The Author of the *System of Nature* establishes it in an emphatical harangue, which Nature in person delivers at the heel of that extraordinary work, and therewith crowns all the extravagances it contains*. Here are the reflexions which a well known Author has made on this nonsensical rant. There is so much truth and sentiment in the passage, that we hope the reader will excuse our transcribing it here.

Exam. of
Materia-
lism, p. 472.

“ O You, who from the impulse I give you tend
“ every instant of your duration towards happiness,
“ resist not my Sovereign law”. How could we
resist

* After the excellent refutation of it, by Mr. Bergier, several others have appeared, among which are distinguished *The Observations* of Mr. de Castillon, of the Royal Society of London; *The Philosophical Reflexions* of Mr. Holland; *A Treatise on Religion, by a Layman*. 2 Vols. Paris at Moutards, 1778. Here is what Voltaire says of this master-piece of Materialism: *The Author is a rantier, contradicts himself, supposes what is in question, and, what is worse, builds upon pretended experiments, found at present to be false and ridiculous, and booted by every body*. New Medleys, Phil. Hist. and Crit. 12th part, p. 312. Edit. 1772.

resist it, and we not free? every thing being under the dominion of necessity. Such an outlet, does not promise a very sensible discourse.

"*It is in my domain that liberty reigns.*" Liberty with necessity! There is a mystery that passes comprehension.

"*Truth enlightens my subjects.*" Happy for them! They are in great need of it, to see through the absurdities with which you gull them.

"*Desist from looking into futurity.*" If you force me to look into it by the manner in which you have framed me, is it me you are to blame? I am your own handy-work: it was your business to frame me otherwise.

"*Be happy.*" With all my heart, but is it possible for me to be so with the gout or the gravel, whenever you think fit to send them. Can I be happy, if you have given me a peevish whimsical temper, dissatisfied with others, and with myself. If you wish I should be happy, make me so.

"*Live for thy fellow creatures.*" I had much rather they lived for me. How can I be happy, sacrificing every day to them my comforts and my interest?

"*Be*

"Be just and good." Yes, provided others be so to me. But if they are unjust and wicked, why should I not be even with them, and retaliate. Suit your precepts to my happiness, or let me hear no more of them.

"Be faithful to thy spouse's love, and let her be so to thine." An excellent advice; but if she, or I myself should fail, by yielding to an invincible propensity, what blame could either of us lay on the other?

"Rear thy children." That I may bring myself to do, if I can expect to see them happy. But if I have nothing to leave them but misery and tears, the greatest service I can render them is to smother them at their birth.

"If my unjust country refuses me happiness, I ought to withdraw from it in silence." And if I cannot leave it, without making myself still more miserable, what law forbids me to be revenged of her injustice. Happiness is the supreme law: I have a right to purchase it, cost what it may.

"Notwithstanding the injustice of men, I will enjoy inward content." A fine resource against the blows of fortune! On the contrary, I will have to reproach myself with having renounced my happiness for beings that deserved only my hatred.

"I will"

3

"I will live for ever in the remembrance of my friends." That is not certain. An unfortunate man has no friends: the dead are soon forgot: and what will it avail me, to be remembered by men, when I am no more?

"Do not offer to complain of thy lot." What! and while you render me miserable, do you refuse me the poor comfort of complaining? That is all the most cruel tyrant could do.

"I inflict," say you, *"on the crimes of the earth, surer vengeance than the Gods."* 1. That is false: once a miscreant is come to be proof against shame and remorse, you have no power over him. 2. It is then your own crimes you punish on the wretches you drag into wickedness by a propensity they cannot resist.

Talk not to me of remorse, or shame, or fear, torturing the souls of the wicked: all that is only from their want of reasoning. What shame or remorse can one have for actions he could not help committing? Nature! O step-mother Nature, it is you, who ought to be ashamed of the vices you have implanted in us; or rather, what vice or crime can there be in what comes only from dire necessity? Can we forget that, in the system of nature, there is neither right nor wrong, good nor evil, virtue nor vice? *The morality of nature*
has

has for its motives the visible interest of each individual, of each set of individuals." That would be very well if the interest of each individual, and that of each set of individuals was always the same; but when they are different, when they stand in direct opposition to each other, which is to get the preference? That is what we want to be informed of.

Shall we be such fools as to go and beg of deaf Nature to remove the delusion that herself has created; to dispel the errors into which she has led us, and that are a consequence of our very organization; to subdue our hearts, that she herself has rendered unsubduable? Shall we conclude with the materialists, that we must submit to the necessity of being wicked, if Nature so pleases?

But come, ye pretended disciples of Nature, this is too long running counter to common sense. Since Religion addresses us a more sensible speech, we can no longer refuse to hear her.

" O man, thou Being endued with free will,
 " and with the faculty of thinking; thou, whom
 " a morose and insulting Philosophy presumes to
 " call the insect of a day, thou deservest not to be
 " thus affronted. That majestic mien thou raisest
 " towards heaven, the variety of thy thoughts, the
 " rapidity of thy desires, the extent of thy pro-
 " jects,

“jects, the immensity of thy hopes witness the
“dignity of thy nature, the nobleness of thine
“origin, the greatness of thy destiny. The pow-
“er you exercise over matter, the motion you
“impress it with, the forms into which you
“mould it, the qualities you discover in it, and
“render useful to your purposes, its compliance
“with your will, must make you fully sensible
“you are its master and that it is made to obey
“you. In the vast extent of heaven, where it
“seems placed beyond your reach, you follow it
“still in the line chalked out for it by the Creator;
“you calculate its moments, you foresee its revo-
“lutions, you combine its laws: under the eyes
“of its great author and arbiter, you stand a wit-
“ness and an admirer. See now in what records
“you are to look for your titles, whether in those
“of Philosophy, or in those of Religion. The
“one tells you, you are the abortion of Nature,
“to be smothered almost at the instant of your
“birth. The other informs you, you are the
“child of the Creator, the inheritor of Heaven,
“the citizen of eternity. From these two speeches
“learn which is your real mother: be a man,
“believe a God, and you will have a father.”

CHAPTER V.

Atheism considered with regard to Society.

SECTION II.

(124) Q. Can a society of men subsist without the belief of a God?

A. An ancient Philosopher affirms it would be easier to build a house in the air, than to found a republick without religion. Another used to say that the want of knowing a God was, in any state, a greater evil than the plague*: that to attack religion was striking at the foundation of human society†. In this they agreed with all the wisest men of antiquity. But perhaps the authority of the greatest of our unbelievers might be fitter at this time to establish the position. "Such is," he says, "the weakness of mankind, and such their perverseness, that it is doubtless better for them
" to

Plutarch.
adversus
Colos.

Volt. Treatise on Toleration,
ch. 20.

* *Dei ignoratio est summa omnium Rerumpublicarum pestis*
Plato, l. 10, De Legibus.

† *Omne societatis humanæ fundamentum convellit qui religionem convellit*, Plato, *ibid.*

“ to be subjugated by any possible superstition,
 “ so it be not of a sanguinary kind, than to
 “ live without religion. Man has always
 “ wanted a curb; and, though it was ridicu-
 “ lous to offer sacrifice to the Fauns, the Syl-
 “ vans and the Naiads, it was much better
 “ for him to adore those phantastick representa-
 “ tions of the Deity, than to give himself up
 “ to Atheism. A reasoning Atheist, if power-
 “ ful and violent, would be as fatal a scourge
 “ as a superstitious murderer.” Wherever
 there is a society established, a religion is ne-
 cessary. The law watches over publick crimes,
 and religion over those that are secret. Suppose
 a society of Atheists with exclusive pretensions,
 as there ever will be, and that they find it
 their interest to cut each others throats; in
 that case there will remain but one, the strong-
 est, and he will be the last.

(125) 2. Are not these authorities contra-
 dicted by that of a celebrated critick, who,
 with far-fetched arguments, undertook to find
 real virtues among the Atheists?

A. This author has confuted himself in more
 than one instance, and has acknowledged the
 illusion of his sophisms, in order to join in the
 general opinion. “ Remove,” says he, “ the
 “ idea of God and his providence, and then

Diction.
 Crit. art.
Brutus.

urge

Ibid. art.
Sadduceans.

Thoughts
on the Co
met.

“urge a little that of virtue, you no longer
 “know what it is. It vanishes.... If to the
 “practice of virtue there was not added the
 “hope of that future happiness, which the
 “Scripture promises to the faithful, we might
 “class innocence and virtue among those things
 “on which Solomon has passed his definitive
 “sentence—*Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity.*
 “Generally speaking, says he again, the
 “truth and chief power of religion, consists
 “in being persuaded of the eternity of rewards
 “and punishments; and so by destroying the
 “doctrine of the soul’s immortality, you de-
 “stroy the main spring of religion. If we con-
 “sider the Atheist with regard to the disposition
 “of his heart, we will find that, being neither
 “restrained by the fear of divine punishment,
 “nor encouraged by the hope of any heavenly
 “reward, he must of course abandon himself
 “to every passion.” But, though Bayle had
 not refuted himself, he has been eminently re-
 futed by the author of *Emile*, by Montesquieu
 in his *Esprit des Loix*; by *l’Ami des Hommes*;
 by Bolinbrooke, Hume, &c. and, as we have
 just now seen, by Voltaire, his admirer and
 copyist*.

(126) 2.

* See all these authorities collected together in the apology
 for religion by M. Bergier, tom. I. *Reflections on the Preface.*
 tom.

(126) Q. Why do you think an Atheist cannot be virtuous?

A. Because in the system of the Atheist, virtue has no motive; it hinders man from happiness, by forbidding him the enjoyment of the only pleasure he can pretend to, and clashes with reason, the essential principle of every virtue.

(127) Q. Are not the virtues of Atheists the more to be valued on that very account, because practised without interest, and merely for their own sake?

A. This

tom. 2. chap. 16, &c. M. Pompignan in his 2d, 4th, and 5th query on incredulity, proves this truth by unanswerable arguments, arising from the very nature of man, and from every thing we know of him.—Bourdaloüe has handled the same subject in an excellent sermon for the Thursday of the second week of Lent: *No probity without religion, no religion without probity.*—*I do not mean, says J. J. Rousseau, that one can be virtuous without religion. I had for a long time that mistaken notion; but I am now thoroughly undeceived.* Lett. on Plays.—A writer, who declares against all religious morality, allows that of the Philosophers to be absolutely vain. “Some Philosophers,” says he, “thought they had given us surer principles, and better adapted to settle our notions of morality. They lay, as a foundation for the doctrine of morals, a pretended *moral sense*, an inexplicable *instinct*, an innate *benevolence*, a love of virtue perfectly *disinterested*. If we examine these ideas, we will find them absolutely chimerical.” Soc. system. t. 1. ch. 5.—To all these testimonies add that of the Encyclopedia: “It is a sure principle that in religion only we can expect to find strict justice, constant probity, perfect sincerity, useful application, a pleasing intercourse, every thing in short that delights and charms in social life.” Dict. Encyclop art. *Probity*. You may see also an excellent dissertation by George Pritz: *De Atheismo et in se fado, et humano generi noxio*. Vol. in 4to.

A. This argument of Cardan, Bayle, La Metrie, &c. implies a contradiction in the terms. It is setting up a phantom, and maintaining it to be better than the reality. There is no such thing as virtue when once you take away the idea of just and unjust, of a supreme legislator; from that moment, the invincible bent of man towards happiness will stop only in the gratification of his actual desires. Not that the hope of reward enters as an essential ingredient into the nature of virtue. Virtue, no doubt, may be practised from other motives, more or less sublime; but if there was no punishment for vice, no reward for virtue, no guardian of the natural laws both human and divine, no providence, no object, no final cause for beings endued with reason, then indeed all notions would be confounded, and the ideas from whence arises honor to virtue, and shame to vice, would be annihilated. There would be no love for order, because order itself would be no more: all would be chance, fatality, necessity.—It is not from interested views that one serves a good prince; but attachment to his person, to his laws, to the glory of his reign, is a consequence of the wisdom, the justice, the beneficence that presides over his government. The general idea of virtue arises from
from

from the idea of a God who punishes and rewards, without the concurrence of any consideration of interest*. The generous sentiments that produce virtue, vanish in the system of annihilation: the soul runs headlong, plunges into infamy, concentrates herself in the search after those fleeting pleasures that constitute her happiness, and, finding in herself the same origin, and the same destination with the brutes, she proposes to her desires the same objects, and confines them within the same compass†.

SECTION II.

(128) Q. How comes it that Epicurus, that capital enemy to God, was ever and always preaching up virtue?

A. 1. Though it were true that Epicurus preached up virtue, all that would follow, is, that he was not steady in his principles, that

VOL. I.

L

he

* Nothing exists but through him who is: it is he who gives an object to justice, a basis to virtue, a reward to this short life, when employed in the practice of what is pleasing to him: it is he who never ceases crying out to the guilty that their crimes have been seen; and that causes the just man, forgotten by the world, to say: thy virtues have a witness. *Spir. Maxims, and Principles of J. J. Rousseau*, chap. 1.

† This subject will be found more fully handled hereafter. book 2. chap. 2.

he varied, that he contradicted and confuted himself, as Philosophers still do at this day.

2. In the language of Epicurus there is an equivocation that has led astray many superficial readers, accustomed to go no farther into any thing than the surface. Virtue, with Epicurus, means pleasure, and in this he is very rational in his principles, and very consequent. Whatever is a matter of pleasing enjoyment, is virtue in the system of the Atheist: reason persuades and authorizes the acquisition of it. To decline it would be folly, stupid indifference, unjustifiable hatred of one's self. Cardinal Polignac has brought into full light, the nature of this Epicurean virtue*; it is strange that people should be still insisting on it, without answering his reasons: still quoting this passage of Cicero: *Negat Epicurus jucunde posse vivi nisi cum virtute vivatur*, and never adding what immediately follows: *nec cum virtute nisi jucundè*. Cicero challenges the whole world to understand by Epicurean pleasure any other than that of the senses (*De finibus*, lib. 3. n. 46.)

Whoever

* *Incipe nunc tandem, Mendax Epicure, videri
Qualis es, et tandem mentitos exue vultus
Ecquid enim petulantem avidumque morabitur ultra,
Si modo conspectus hominum fugisse licebit,
Quin supret, rapiat, jugulet, perimatque veneno,
Dum jubet ingenitus furor, et Regina voluptas?* Antiluc, lib. 1.

Whoever understands by it the pleasures of the soul, never read the first lines of Lucretius, the disciple and interpreter of Epicurus.

Æneadum Genitrix, Divûmque hominum que voluptas.

Did Venus preside over the pleasures of the mind? "What?" says Cicero*, "and don't
 " I know what ἡδονή means in Greek, and *Voluptas* in Latin? Whoever wants to be an
 " Epicurean may be that in two days: and I
 " shall not be able to understand what the
 " thing means? You say yourselves (it is to
 " an Epicurean he speaks) You say there is no
 " need of learning to become a Philosopher.
 " Indeed though I am pretty cool in disputa-
 " tion, I can scarce contain myself." In reality, why should not Cicero have understood what the Epicureans, men, for the most part, of confined abilities, and incapable of entering into nice discussions, could understand at the first word†? Epicurus speaks of that pleasure, which every animal at its birth has the knowledge of by sensation alone Epicurus had

L 2

an

* Hoc frequenter dici solet a vobis, non intelligere nos qualem dicat Epicurus Voluptatem. Quod quidem mihi si quando dictum est, est autem dictum non parum sæpe; etsi satis clemens sum in disputando, tamen interdum soleo subiras. Ego non intelligo quid sit ἡδονή græcè, latinè Voluptas. De Fin. 2, 4.

† Vestri optimè disputant nihil opus esse, cum, qui Philosophus futurus sit, scire litteras . . . De plagis omnibus colligitis bonos quidem viros, sed certe non pereruditos. De Fin. 2, 4.

De Finib.
L. 5.

an excellent maxim, which was, never to make use of any word, that would require to be explained by another word. The only quality he required in an Orator, and much more in a Philosopher, was perspicuity: he set the example of it himself. *Complectitur verbis quod vult, et dicit planè quod intelligam.* His disciples did the same; so that Cicero, who, with his friend Atticus, had attended the lectures of Phædrus and Zeno the successors of Epicurus, declares that in several discussions he had with his friend on these matters, there never was any question about the meaning of the words, but always about the substance of the doctrine:

Tusc. iii. 8. neque erat unquam controversia quid intelligerem, sed quid probarem. “Why this tergiversation,” says Cicero again, addressing himself to Epicurus? “Are these, or not, your words? “Here is what you say in the book that contains your doctrine on this topick: *I declare, I know no other pleasure, than that which is caused by relishing tastes, agreeable sounds, the beauty of objects that strike the eyes, and the other sensible impressions that are felt all over the body, and, that no body may say, it is the joy of the soul that constitutes those pleasures, I further declare that I conceive no joy in the soul, but when she sees those things at hand which I have mentioned, &c.* “Am

“ Am I wrong? Do I invent? Let me be refuted. All I want, all I look for in every subject is the truth.” And, after all, if the Epicureans understood, by the word pleasure, any thing, besides what is generally meant, it was not very clever of them, in a country where they had so many rivals and enemies, to go and make use of an expression, whereof the meaning, being at least equivocal, might give a handle to calumny. “ If their notions were pure and free from reproach, where was the necessity for them to go and exhibit virtue in the garb of an infamous harlot?”

Quid enim necesse tanquam Meretricem in Matronarum catum, sic Voluptatem in Virtutum catum abducere? Invidiosum nomen est et infamiae subiectum. Cicero. Ibid.

(129) Q. Can arguments conclude against facts? If, as our Philosophers assure us, it be certain that Epicurus was a model of virtue, are we not to infer, that his doctrine on this head was irreproachable?

A. 1. Though we should grant that Epicurus was virtuous, that would be granting nothing, of which the Atheists could avail themselves.

1. Because one virtuous man*, without religion, among

* Even that virtue would be only for show, and confined to outward behaviour.

among thousands who profess a religion, proves nothing in favour of the possibility of a Republic of Atheists. Fear, honour, friendship, human respect, &c. are restraints that would no longer exist, if his principles became general.

2. Because Epicurus was brought up in the fear of the Gods, and with principles of morality; and it is hard for the first impressions not to influence the conduct, even after one has thrown off the yoke. Thus it is that our modern unbelievers attribute to Philosophy the remains of virtue they have preserved, which, in reality, are but the wreck of their faith, and of their early christian education*. 3. Though an Atheist, taken up with his pleasures, or his Philosophy, should be a quiet inoffensive man, and, in some respects, a useful citizen, are we to conclude he will be still the same, when

great

*Venerunt
mibi omnia
bona pariter
cum illa . . .
et ignorabam
quia horum
omnium ma-
ter est. Sap.*

*Letters
written from
Lausanne by
a Protestant
Lady. Ge-
neva, 1787.
Lett the
13th.*

* In a late publication, the Author of which is not more a friend to religion, than he ought, we read the following passage: "The President must needs argue the point. He said, like many others, that without religion we would not have less morality, and quoted some honest men of the Atheist party. Tell him, that in order to judge of the matter, it would be necessary to see three or four generations, and a whole people of Atheists. For, if I have had a Father, a Mother, Masters that were Christians or Deists, I must have contracted habits of thinking, which I never will lose, whatever system I may adopt, and which will influence my children, without my seeking or knowing it; so that if Diderot was an honest man, he might thank that religion for it, which from ingratitude, he contended was false."

great passions are kindled in his soul, and his propensity to vice strengthened by great interests*? "I would not wish," says Voltaire very prudently, "to deal with an Atheist Prince, who might find it his interest to get me pounded in a mortar: pounded I am certain I should be. I would not wish, were I a Sovereign, to have to deal with Atheist courtiers, who would find it their interest to poison me: I should be obliged, at all events, to be taking antidotes every day. It is therefore absolutely necessary for Princes and their subjects, that the idea of a Supreme Being, the Creator of all things, the dispenser of rewards and punishments, should be deeply impressed upon all minds." "The Atheist," says the same Philosopher in another place, "the Atheist, " double-

Diction.
Philosophique.
Art. *Atheism*.

*Homily on
Atheism.*

* What has not ambition alone driven people to, whose errors, perhaps, were far short of Atheism, who had only an itch for dogmatizing in the Philosophick way, for running down received principles, and setting up a morality and religion of their own? What disturbances have they not raised in states? What attempts made on the public safety? Pythagoras and Zeno undertook to usurp the Supreme authority; Periander, to be tyrant over his own country-men. In the reign of Vespasian, Demetrius, Hostilius, and Helvetius, had the insolence to go and defy the throne; and compelled that good Prince to banish the whole sect. Pallas conspired against the life of Valens. Locke against James II. Raynal is with frantic rage blowing up the flame of rebellion. The history of all ages, the annals of all nations, are full of the enormities of these Egoists. *Infra*, n. 392.

“ double hearted, ungrateful, a slanderer, a plun-
 “ derer, a cut-throat, acts consistently, if he be
 “ sure of impunity on the side of men; for, if
 “ there be no God, this monster is a God to
 “ himself: he sacrifices to himself all that he
 “ has a wish for, and all that stands in his
 “ way. The most tender entreaties, the strong-
 “ est reasons can have no more effect on him,
 “ than on a famished wolf rushing on his
 “ prey It is proved to a demonstration,
 “ that Atheism, at best, may suffer the social
 “ virtues to subsist in the tranquil apathy of
 “ private life, but must prompt to the perpe-
 “ tration of every crime in the storms of pub-
 “ lic life. A private society of Atheists, be-
 “ tween whom there is no bone of contention,
 “ may last some time without disturbance:
 “ but if the world was governed by Atheists,
 “ it might as well be under the immediate
 “ controul of those infernal beings, that are
 “ represented to us, as rioting on the victims
 “ abandoned to their rage.” Rousseau, Hume,
 D’Alembert, Montesquieu, speak on the subject
 just as Voltaire does. “ *I fear God,*” said a
 “ man of great good sense: *and, next to him, I*
 “ *fear only the man that does not fear him**.”
 Those who give the greatest extent to tolera-
 tion,

* The same thought is strongly expressed in a passage of the
 16th Psal. *A resistētibz dextera tua custodi me, ut pupillam*
oculi.

tion, exclude the Atheists, and think they deserve death; a decision which they ground on the unavoidable alternative either of letting the state perish, or ridding it of its most mortal enemies. (See Dict. Encycl. Art. *Atheism*.)

2. Though it be not very material to know the particulars of Epicurus's life, yet the positiveness with which people go on founding the praises of this Philosopher, obliges us to show that his morals were perfectly of a piece with his doctrine, and that he lived the worthy head of that class of men, that Horace calls *Epicuri de grege Porcos*. Voltaire and the Encyclopedists will absolutely have it, that Epicurus was a virtuous man, "The latter say, "he admitted into his gardens many celebrated women: Leontium, the mistress of Metrodorus: Philenis, one of the most virtuous women of Athens; Necidia, Erotia, Hedia, Marmaria, Boidia, Phædria." Now, all these celebrated virtuous women, were women of blasted characters, according to Diogenes Lærtius, and the ancient writers. One must depend exceedingly on the ignorance of his readers, to represent to them, Philenis as one of the most virtuous women in Athens. After that, it remains only to make them believe that Messalina was one of the most virtuous women in Rome. Philenis was worse again than Messa-

lina. Not content with corrupting the youth of her time, she laboured to corrupt the youth of future ages by an abominable book she composed. (See Junius's Adages on these words, *Philænidis Commentarii*, and the remark *p.* to the article *Helen* in Bayle's Dictionary) there is no reading S. Clement of Alexandria, Lucian, Martial, Athenæus, Suidas, Giraldi, &c. without holding the name of Philenis in execration. If the learned Encyclopedists had but opened the Dictionaries of Gouldman, Stephens, Hoffman, &c; they would have found the name of Philenis with an infamous epithet, the same that Diogenes Laertius gives to Necidia, Erotia, and the rest of her companions. Epicurus was as debauched as the women he frequented. "Were I", says Plutarch, "ever so willing, it would be impossible for me to pass by in silence the impudence and the impertinence of this man whose sensual appetites nothing could satisfy but exquisite meats, delicious wines, the nicest perfumes, and besides all that, young females, such as a Leontium, a Boidion, a Hedia, a Necidion, whom he kept and maintained." I shall not attempt to relate what Plutarch adds of the horrible excesses of Epicurus with his domestick Polyænus, and a woman of pleasure from the town of Cyzicum. (See Plutarch in
his

his Treatise on the subject, *That there is no living happy according to the principles of Epicurus*, translated by Amyot, and the article Leontium in Bayle's Dictionary).

(130) Q. Allowing that the pleasure meant by Epicurus was sensual pleasure, have we not reason to believe that he had other good qualities that made him a reputable Philosopher?

A. 1. If, as we have made it appear, Epicurus's System destroys the foundation, and the only rational motive of virtue, what grounds can there be for supposing, that, by a ridiculous inconsistency, he was a virtuous man?

2. There is nothing more apt to enervate every virtue than voluptuousness. All the vigour of the soul melts away in the enjoyment of sensual pleasure. Fortitude, firmness, courage, zeal, activity, the love of toil, the taste for great and sublime exertions, all is swallowed up in the deep gulph of effeminacy and debauchery. But, what is still more remarkable is the dreadful effects of this vice upon society. There is nothing, says one of the most sensible writers of this age, nearer allied to cruelty than voluptuousness. Degraded by these gross sensations, man falls into the most brutal Egoism. He considers his fellow-creatures only as the instruments of his pleasure, as the sport of his passions,

passions, as the victims of his hatred, of his humour, of his whims An observation verified by the history of Nero, of Attila, of Mahomet II. of all the tyrants that have brought desolation on mankind.

(131) Q. Have there not been learned men, who wrote Apologies for Epicurus?

A. There have, as I observed already. But Epicurus is not the more virtuous for that; and those learned apologists employed their time very badly. For my part, I had rather believe the holy Fathers and Cicero, Plutarch, Cumberland, Fabricius, Cardinal Polignac, &c. than the apologists of Epicurus. An ancient poet wrote also the apology of Philenis, an ancient orator that of Busris. Cardan composed an encomium of Nero. But what was meant only as a literary amusement by these writers, is become the etiquette of modern Philosophy, and a serious business for our new Philosophers. They lavish their praises on Julian the Apostate, they attempt to justify the persecutions of Nero, Domitian, Decius, Diocletian, Maxentius, &c. but Samuel, David, Constantine, Charlemagne, S. Lewis, &c. they tear to pieces. To take the lead, and dictate to the judgments of the reading vulgar, those gentlemen profess a contempt for all that was in

*Quoniam
laudatur pec-
cator in de-
sideriis ani-
mæ suæ, et
Iniquus bene-
dicitur. Psal.
10.*

in possession of the public esteem, and esteem what common sense ever held in contempt. That is, says S. Jerom, labouring to bring people back again to childhood, by obliterating all received ideas, and all acquired knowledge.

*Senis lingu-
am mutare,
& canes—
centem jam
mundum ad
infantiam
retere
parvulorum.*

—Might we not judge of the life of Epicurus, by that of our modern Philosophers? Those of them whose characters were best established, and that were looked upon as perfect models of every virtue, have much disappointed those who took a nearer view of them*. “I considered” says Rousseau, “all those grave writers, “as modest, wise, virtuous, irreproachable “men: I formed to myself ideas quite angelical of their society, and would not have “approached the house of any of them but “with a kind of religious awe. I have seen “them at last: that childish prejudice of mine “is vanished, and that is the only error of “which they have cured me†”. Do they think we

*Miscellaneous works,
t. 1. p. 153.*

* See the art. *Cacouacs*, in the Diction. Antiphil. It is an allegorical picture of the character and morals of our Philosophers. *New Memoirs to serve for the History of the Cacouacs*, by M. Moreau, 1757. *Catechism, or decisions of Cases of Conscience*, by the Abbot of St. Cyr, 1758. *Philosophical Memoirs of the Baron of *****, by the Abbe de Crillon, 1777. *Philosophical Confidence*, by a Minister of Geneva, 1777. *Phanaticism of the Philosophers*, by Linguet.

† Hume is not better satisfied with Rousseau, than Rousseau is with the other Philosophers. He calls him a *snake warmed in the bosom of friendship*. It is worth ones while to observe

we are unacquainted with the anecdotes of their life, and that people will be still imposed upon by their pompous encomiums on virtue?*

(132) Q. Whence come then those high panegyricks, with which the leaders of the philosophick party are decorated in most of the modern publications?

Bourdaloüe
Serm. on
the Man
born blind.

A. The praises they mutually give one another, and receive from the herd of automatick infidels, whom the mechanism of stupid imitation has made echoes to the heads of Irreligion, cause no surprize to informed persons. The enemies of faith have at all times employed that means of propagating their errors. "To be an adherent of theirs, is the pinnacle of merit: not to be so, the sink of infamy. If you be devoted

observe closely the adversaries of religion. The knowledge of their characters, of their morals, of their conduct, of the temper of their minds and of their hearts, is perhaps the simplest and safest way to guard against the seduction of their writings. You will ask yourself: and are these the guides we must follow, the models we must imitate, the idols we must worship?

* Never perhaps was virtue, that lovely modification of the rational-soul, more talked of, more admired, more extolled, than in this age. It would seem as if, by the frequent use that is made of the name, people would make themselves some amends for the loss of the thing, or express their regret of those parting charms, which irreligion has banished the earth, and pursue with a last wishful look the decay of a treasure, whose value is known only when it is lost.

Virtutem videant, contabescantque reliq̃a.

Perfius.

“ devoted to their party, never trouble yourself
 “ about acquiring abilities or virtues: your de-
 “ votion to them will stand you in lieu of every
 “ thing: this is the peculiar characteristic of
 “ heresy, which has been ever distinguished by
 “ its passion for extolling to the heavens its
 “ friends and votaries, and sinking into nought,
 “ those who presume to attack it, or to impede its
 “ progress. The way with heretics was, first to
 “ erect themselves into men of rare, surpassing
 “ merit, and then their partisans and associates:
 “ all that clung to them was great; and the
 “ single title of being in their interests, was a
 “ complete encomium. According to them,
 “ there was none among them but high ge-
 “ niuses, but prodigies of learning and virtue.”
 Do not forget (says M. L.) that all party folks
 canonize one another by turns, as Isaiah says, *Isaiah. 9.*

Beatificant et Beatificantur. A celebrated Latin
 Orator expresses himself very prettily on this
 subject: *exercent quasi quædam monopolia fume, Commire*
et societates laudum; laudant mutuo ut laudentur: Orat. de
fanore gloriam dant et accipiunt: cateris omnibus fama. arte paranda
obtrectant. An elegant poet has given the fol-

lowing advice to a prince, who was thought to
 be no friend to the Philosophers:

HOW

From an
Epistle to
C. Falken-
stein, at
Tournay,
1778.

HOW can you, sir, not apprehend
Lest, of this Philosophick host,
The gen'als, officers and men,
Nay, and the raw recruits we see
Practising daily for the field,
Of every kind of worth and merit,
Now judges high, without appeal,
Should wreak on you that proud disdain,
You shew for Dame Philosophy?
Of glory they the sole dispensers,
Sole guardians to the temple of Fame,
Which opens at their will and shuts,
From the sacred gate their vote
Keeps ev'n the scepter'd monarch off,
Whose virtues on the crown he wears.
Reflect the most refulgent lustre,
Unless he to that merit adds
That of being their Proselyte,
Or, at the least, their amateur.
To reach so high as their esteem,
A man, were he the first of heroes,
The most magnanimous of princes,
Must bear to walk under their banners,
From their superior light he must,
Borrowing for himself a spark,
Trample under foot the old fashion'd veil
Of popular illusion.
By this unerring rule it is
That their impartial suffrage
Fixes all honours and all ranks:
And dooms to class with tyrants fell
A Constantine, a Theodosius.
Of thy atchievements great and good
Oh! may they never undertake
To write the fair historic page!
Were you possessed of virtues greater
Than Titus was, or Charlemagne,
Prince, I should tremble for your fame.

SECTION III.

(133) Q. Are there not some, to whom religion is useless, and to whose reformation it is not more conducive than Atheism? Bayle thinks this observation very favourable to incredulity.

A. I. To know whether the belief of a God has not rendered such people better, it would be requisite to know what they would have been, had they made profession of Atheism. Such a one whom religion did not prevent from stealing, had he had no religion, would be a house-burner, a high-way robber, a murderer. There is always a great difference between the worst of Christians and an unbeliever. However inexcusable vice, in one who has preserved his faith, there is less reason to despair of his amendment, than of that of an unbeliever subject to the same passions. In the first, vice is a weakness which faith condemns. The persuasion he is in that his conduct is criminal and dangerous to himself, is a reason for hoping, that one time or other he will reform, or will recoil from other crimes, which his religion condemns with more severity. He has always an unerring rule to direct his judgment, relative

tive to good and evil : and if the prevalence of passion hinders him from conforming to this rule in some instances, it is not to be presumed he will deviate from it upon all occasions. The unbeliever on the contrary sees, in the vice he is addicted to, nothing that clashes with his doctrine. It was the passions that gave birth to incredulity, and incredulity in its turn authorises the passions and enflames them. Free and unbridled in their course, there is no knowing where they will stop ; and all that can be said with certainty is, that there is no excess, no enormity, to which they will not drive an unbeliever, if all his steps are measured by his principles. The sense of goodness and rectitude he has from nature, is all the support his probity has ; but these sentiments we again, and cannot too often repeat it, stand themselves in need of being supported. Without this foundation, the fabric has no solidity, and the smallest gust of the passions is able to overthrow it. Such is the invaluable advantage of faith. Those who obey its dictates, it raises to an eminent degree of sanctity. In the shipwreck of morals, probity at least it can preserve. But it is the part of incredulity, when once the Christian virtues are gone, to leave no resource for the moral.

2. If

2. If religion does not mend all men, there are many it does. Is a remedy useless, because it does not cure all those that are sick?

3. "Crimes are committed in spite of religion; they are committed in spite of the civil laws, in spite of the voice of reason, in spite of philosophy. Therefore religion, law, reason, philosophy, are sources of mischief to society, as well as Atheism.—The sophism is ridiculous and ought to make them blush, who bring it forward." Such is the answer of the author of *the Spirit of Laws*.

(134) Q. Are not the civil laws, honour, education, &c. a more powerful check upon the passions, than religious sentiments?

A. 1. The civil laws are attentive only to the good of society, and check only what is external in vice. Religion forms the mind and the heart of man, proscribes the secret as well as the public crimes, condemns the will as well as the deed. Impunity, so common at the tribunal of the laws, is banished from the tribunal of religion*. The civil laws may be unjust, imprudent

* Lucretius calls on sleep and the fever to come and support the laws. In the delirium, says he, or in a dream, a malefactor may happen to publish his crimes, and thereby prevent them from continuing unknown. A Philosopher who gives such substitutes as these to the belief of a God, must be himself either delirious or dreaming. But let us hear the poet

prudent, unreasonable, they often contradict one another, they vary according to the climates, the governments, the tempers of the legislators, &c. There is, to be sure, with respect to solidity and uniformity, a very hopeful foundation for virtue to rest on! The unbelievers, ever in contradiction with themselves, ever inconsistent in all the parts of their systems, assure us that religion is an invention of the legislators; calculated to maintain their authority, and the rigour of the laws; how then can they come now and tell us, that these laws are sufficient of themselves, and independent of all support?

2. The Atheist's honour, in concert, no doubt, with his reason, requires he should enjoy, as long as he is able to enjoy, and that nothing should with impunity oppose his interest. In this system real honour, as well as real virtue are words without meaning.

poet himself delivering this sublime doctrine. It will give us some idea of the nonplus to which the Atheists bring themselves.

*Nec facile est placidam et pacatam ducere vitam
Qui violat factis communia fœdera pacis;
Etsi fallit enim divûm genus humanumque
Perpetuo tamen id fore clam diffidere debet:
Quippe ubi se multi per somnia sæpe loquentes,
Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe feruntur.
Et celata diu in medium peccata dedisse.*

Lib. 5. De Nat. Rerum.

3. Education is the teaching of children the principles that are to regulate their conduct. Methinks I hear an Atheist thus instructing his son: "You have nothing to hope or to fear
 " from God: you may conceal yourself from
 " the eyes of men: you have no other happiness to expect, but that which you will
 " procure yourself: to arrive at it, your passions will be your guides." This boy must undoubtedly become a pattern of virtue.—
 " Beyond that" (the idea of a just God who rewards and punishes) "beyond that," says Rousseau, "I see nothing but injustice, hypocrisy, and falsehood among men. Private
 " interest, which in a competition must bear
 " down every thing, teaches every individual
 " to deck out vice with the mask of virtue.
 " *Let every one work for me: let them labour for
 " my happiness at the expence of their own: let
 " every thing be done for my benefit: let mankind
 " perish, if requisite, in anguish and misery, to spare
 " me a moment of pain or hunger.* Such is the
 " inward language of every unbeliever who
 " reasons. Yes, I will maintain it while I
 " live: whoever has said in his heart, There
 " is no God, if he speaks otherwise, he is
 " either a liar or a madman."

(135) Q. Is not the superstitious man, who forms to himself false notions of God, more to be blamed than the Atheist, who only denies his existence? This at least is the opinion of Plutarch and Bayle.

A. 1. The Atheist is more blameable in regard to God, whose most essential attribute, which is his existence, he denies, and thereby attacks, in the most direct manner, the nature of the necessary Being.

2. He is more blameable with regard to society, whereof he overturns the foundation, and loosens all the ties. Plutarch *had rather it should be said, There is no Plutarch, than that Plutarch is a bad man*: but 1. There is no necessity that Plutarch should exist. 2. Plutarch's existence is nothing to human society. 3. The superstitious man, by forming to himself false notions of the Deity, does not mean to insult the Supreme Being, but to attribute to it the qualities he thinks compatible with its infinite perfections. As to Bayle, we may refute him here with the words of his own copyist. "When
 " men," says he, " have not right notions of
 " the Deity, they supply the place of them with
 " wrong ones; just as in hard times people trade
 " with bad, for want of good money. The hea-
 " then dreads committing a crime for fear of
 " being

“ being punished by his idols : the Indian of
 “ Malabar is in like manner afraid of being
 “ punished by his Pagod.”

SECTION IV.

(136) Q. CAN the mischiefs, that Atheism would bring upon society, come up to those that Fanaticism has brought ?

A. Fanaticism, which is a blind excessive zeal for objects, either religious or considered as such, is an evil without doubt ; but this evil, which is always strongly opposed by Religion herself*, is an incomparably smaller evil than Atheism. Fanaticism, says J. J. Rousseau, Emile, t. 3, p. 198. however cruel and bloody, is a great and vigorous passion that exalts the human heart ; whereas Irreligion, and, generally speaking, the reasoning, philosophising spirit, pins down to this life, enervates, debases the soul, concentrates all the passions in the meanness of self-interest. “ If Atheism does not cause the
 “ shedding

* In the principles of Christians, particularly Catholics, enthusiasm and fanaticism can hardly find access to sound sensible heads ; because, among the Catholics, the rule of faith and morals is ascertained by a common publick standard of doctrine, issuing at once from reason and revelation. All that does not square with this rule is acknowledged to be illusion and censurable imagination.

Virg. Ec-
logue. 8.

“shedding of human blood, it is not so much
 “from a love of peace, as from an indifference
 “to what is good. The world may go as it
 “list, it matters not to the pretended sage, so
 “he remain quiet in his closet. His principles
 “go not to the killing of men, but he prevents
 “them from coming to life, by destroying mo-
 “rality.” He says, pretty like that desponding
 shepherd, mentioned by an ancient poet: *omnia
 vel medium fiant mare.* What is the good of the
 state to me? what the prosperity, the glory of
 my country? My soul bereft of her hopes,
 balked of her immortality, withdrawn from that
 worship whereby she lived in communication
 with heaven, with men, with all parts of the
 creation, insulates and contracts herself, and
 reduced to the nature and condition of the brute,
 gives to her views and pretensions the same
 limits and concerns. Fanaticism set loose at the
 object of its rage, is restrained in every thing
 else by the voice of Religion: Atheism stops at
 nothing, and sets no bounds to its devastations.
 —Should a prisoner, in the violence of passion,
 make use of his chain to knock down his fellow
 prisoner, will any body say, he would have
 been a less dangerous fellow, had he not been
 chained.—Fanaticism is but a temporary mis-
 chief, that subsides when the ferment of the
 blood

blood is over : but Atheism is a chronical evil, that gnaws and consumes without intermission. If it be not always in the paroxysm, its very silence, says a Philosopher, like the silence of death, makes woful havock. Stories, with ridiculous exaggerations, have been told of the mischiefs caused by Fanaticism : had Atheism ever had the ruling of this world, there would be no body to write the history of its ravages : the human species would have been destroyed, as it would by Caligula, had it had but one head*.—Atheism too has had its fanaticks, witness a Vanini, witness the young Atheists of Abbeville, who were sentenced by an arret of the Parliament of Paris†. Lucretius tells us the contempt of the Gods used, at times, to throw the soul of Epicurus into violent agitations‡. *The System of Nature* says, it is impossible for one not to grow warm on a subject

VOL. I.

M

he

* This tyrant wished that the whole human species had but one head, that he might have the pleasure of striking it off at one blow.

† They insulted publicly the most solemn display of religious pomp, broke the Crucifixes and the images ; imitated in derision the sacred mysteries ; adored on bended knees, books filled with profaneness and obscenity. See the arret of the Parliament of Paris, of the 4th June, 1766. The same scandalous scene was renewed in Liege, in 1779.

‡ *Quem nec cura Deum, nec fulmina, nec minitanti
Murmure compressit calum, sed eo magis acrem
Virtutem irritant animi.* Lib. I. De Nat. Rerum.

he considers as important : and was there ever an author that thought his system of greater importance ? The Editors never cease dignifying it with the epithet of *important*, and *highly important*. What is this restless rage for proselyting, with which Rousseau so justly reproaches the Atheists, what else but downright Fanaticism ? What are all the manœuvres and intrigues of the Philosophick party, so prevalent in this age ? What, their ridiculous excesses in 1778, at the death of their old leader, their atrocious behaviour to all who presume to oppose their progress ; that self-sufficiency ; in short, that medley they shew of pride, ignorance and profaneness, what else, but rank Fanaticism*. Now, if every species of Fanaticism deserves execration, in what predicament is this to be held ? And if Fanaticism alone can vie with Atheism for the precedence among the scourges of mankind, how will it be, when both these fiends are combined together ? Let us conclude this subject by saying, with the

Hume's
Moral Es-
says, Ess.
12th.

* *Pride, presumption, a heated imagination, ignorance, a spirit of independence, there, says a Philosopher, are the real sources of fanaticism.* I leave it to be determined whether these qualities are to be found on the side of the adorers of a God, or on that of the enemies of his existence and worship. See the fanaticism of the Philosophers by Linguet, who, by the bye, has now and then his own.

the Philosopher we have already more than once opposed to the Atheist, that the existence of God

Is of Society the sacred bond,
Of Equity the primary foundation,
The ruffian's terror, and the just man's hope.
Robbed of their stamp divine, should e'er the heavens
Cease to make known the glories of their Maker;
If God were not, God then should be invented.
Him let the sage proclaim, let monarchs dread.
Oppress me not, ye kings, or, if your pride
Disdain the tears you cause mine eyes to shed,
I have a friend in heaven. Know that, and tremble*.

Volt. Ep.
to the Au-
thor of the
Book on the
three Impes-
tors.

* The impossibility of preserving human society, and procuring safety and happiness to its members, without the idea of a God, ought to be considered as a demonstration of his existence. His name indeed is written on every part of the creation: The grandeur and beauty of the work speaks, in the most expressive language, the power and wisdom of the Maker: but, framing us, as he has done, such as not to be able to do without him, does he not thereby shew himself to us, in a more conspicuous light, as the witness and judge of all our actions and thoughts, indispensably necessary to our happiness? That is one of the most convincing proofs of his existence. It is written at once in our minds and in our hearts.

the Philosopher we have already more than
once appealed to the Axiom, that the exist-
ence of God

Vol. III.
to the An-
that of the
Book contains
this subject.

of being the first book
(1) I have the pleasure to announce
that the second volume of the first part of the
Catechism is now in the press, and will be
published in the month of June. It contains
the second part of the first book, and the
beginning of the second book. It is written
in the same style as the first, and is
equally interesting and useful.

The simplicity of style, the purity of
language, and the accuracy of the reasoning
of the Catechism, are its chief merits. It
is written in a plain and simple manner,
and is adapted to the use of the young
and the ignorant. It is a book which
every one should read, and which every
one should possess. It is a book which
will do much good in the world, and
which will be a blessing to all who
read it. It is a book which is
worthy of the highest praise, and
which is deserving of the most
generous support.

THE SECOND VOLUME OF THE
FIRST PART OF THE
PHILOSOPHICAL CATECHISM
IS NOW IN THE PRESS,
AND WILL BE PUBLISHED
IN THE MONTH OF JUNE.

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL CATECHISM.

Book the Second.

THE SOUL OF MAN.

CHAPTER I.

Is the Soul spiritual?

SECTION I.

(137) 2. **W**HAT is the main point in question among Philosophers, in their endless debates on the subject of the soul's spirituality?

A. It is to determine whether matter be capable of knowledge and thought.

(138) 2. Is it full evident that matter cannot be raised to that degree of excellence and perfection?

A. We

B. 1. ch. 2.
Art. 2.

A. We have proved to a demonstration that matter has not even the power of moving itself, and that it can get no motion but from a foreign cause. Now between motion and thought the gap is very wide. Though matter had the power of moving itself, there could be nothing inferred in favour of its thinking power; which shews how far the system of the materialists is short of probability. All the notions we have of matter concur in representing it as *a substance merely passive*; that is even the definition that some Philosophers have given of it. Now, a being merely passive that could produce thought and would have the inconceivable activity of the human mind, is a most ridiculous absurdity.

(139) *Q.* Is it not confining the power of God, to refuse him that of creating a portion of matter capable of thinking?

A. No; no more than if one refused him the power of causing two and two not to make four. To place within God's power, things contradictory, ideas that destroy one another, is insulting his sovereign Majesty, and spreading darkness over our belief of his Omnipotence.

(140) *Q.* Notwithstanding the known attributes of matter, have there not been Philosophers who allowed it the possibility of thinking?

A. An

A. An Englishman of the name of Locke, and a Frenchman of the name of Voltaire, have laboured to bring that idea into vogue, but it has not throve among people of sense. Locke, upon that occasion, has been extolled by the materialists, as a man of profound genius; but Ramsay, who was well versed in men, and particularly acquainted with Locke, speaks very differently of him. “Locke,” says he, Lett. to M. Racine. “a superficial genius, who has written the elements, rather than investigated thoroughly the principles of philosophy, was, I believe, a decided Socinian. When a Philosopher is no longer guided by authority, he will infallibly go astray.”

(141) *Q.* On what foundation did these two gentlemen build their opinion?

A. On our want of a sufficient knowledge of the inward nature of matter, to pronounce upon what may, or may not be compatible with it.

(142) *Q.* Is that foundation very solid?

A. It is just as if I attributed to the beings I am not thoroughly acquainted with, qualities opposite to those I know them to possess. “I know not,” said a man of wit, talking on this subject, “all that is in the mind of Locke and Voltaire, but would it be the less
“ridiculous

“ ridiculous of me to go and suppose it is a
“ parcel of pebble-stones, cut round or square,
“ or rhomboid like.” I must do justice to
B. 2. ch. 23. Locke, notwithstanding the doubts he has en-
deavoured to raise upon this matter : he has
done homage to truth, and has himself demon-
strated the incompatibility of matter and
thought. “ It appears,” says he, “ with the
“ utmost evidence, that as we have no other
“ idea of matter, but as of something in which
“ many qualities exist that strike our senses ;
“ so, no sooner have we supposed a subject in
“ which thought, knowledge, doubt, &c. exist,
“ than we conceive as clear an idea of the spi-
“ ritual, as we did of the corporeal substance.
“ It is impossible,” adds he, “ to conceive
“ that matter can from itself get feeling, per-
“ ception, knowledge. Divide it into as many
“ parts as you please, give it as much motion
“ and as many shapes as you please, those infi-
“ nitely small parts, will not act otherwise on
“ bodies of proportionable bulk to theirs, than
“ on bodies of inch or foot diameter. The
“ parts of an inch or a foot diameter impel
“ one another ; that is all they can do ; the
“ small ones can do no more. Motion, in
“ short, continues he, can never beget thought,
“ and it will be for ever as far beyond the
“ power

“ power of motion and matter to produce
 “ knowledge, as it is beyond the power of
 “ naught to produce matter.”

Voltaire, in a dialogue between Lucretius and Posidonius, returns like Locke to common sense, with which he falls in, almost as often as he falls out.

Posidonius. “ You’ll readily allow, there is
 “ no likelihood of a rock’s being capable of
 “ composing the Iliad. Would a sun beam be
 “ more capable? Suppose the sun beam an
 “ hundred thousand times more subtile and
 “ rapid: will that brightness, that tenuity ever
 “ amount to feeling and thought?”

Lucretius. “ Perhaps they may, when in or-
 “ gans duly prepared.”

Posidonius. “ There you are reduced to per-
 “ hapses. Fire is not more qualified of itself
 “ to think than ice. Though I should suppose
 “ it to be fire, that which thinks in you, which
 “ feels and wills, you would be then forced to
 “ allow, that it is not of itself, it wills, feels,
 “ and thinks.”

Lucretius. “ No, it is not of itself, but by
 “ the combination of that fire with my or-
 “ gans.”

Posidonius. “ How can you imagine, that
 “ from two bodies, neither of which thinks

“separately, thought can arise when they are joined?”

Lucretius. “As a tree and clay separately bear no fruit, and do bear fruit, when the tree is planted in the clay.”

Pofidonius. “The comparison is only plausible. The tree has in itself the seed of the fruit, as we see in the buds, and the juice of the earth expands these buds. It would be requisite then, that fire had in itself the seeds of thought, and that the organs of the body should expand those seeds.”

Lucretius. “What impossibility do you see in that.”

Pofidonius. “I see that fire, that quintessential matter, has no more pretension to thought, than a stone. The production of a being must have something in it similar to that which produces it. Now, a thought, a feeling, an act of the will, have no thing in them that resembles fire.”

(143) 2 Since the domain of matter is increasing every day, by means of the phenomena exhibited by electricity and magnetism, is there not room to hope that some time or other, qualities will be discovered in matter, which will bring it near the power of thinking?

A. The

A. The known qualities of matter will not certainly be destroyed by the unknown ones, nor the old by the new; and therefore we may safely pronounce upon what matter will never be, though we cannot upon the whole of what it will be. It will for ever have extension, for ever divisibility, &c. but the simplicity, the activity of thought will never belong to it.— Indeed our understandings are nonplussed at the effects of electricity, of magnetism, and other wonders of nature. But in all these phenomena we see nothing but a blind, passive, and merely mechanical principle, that can enter into no degree of comparison with a principle, that knows, deliberates, and acts freely. Will any body say, that electrical fire thinks, that attraction reflects, that both the one and the other have a spontaneous motion? Besides, all motion is divisible, which can not be said of the thinking faculty, unless you would be for shewing one half, one fifth of an human intellect*. Here is a passage from

* To these general, but decisive considerations on electricity, I shall add some of the simplest reflections, drawn from its known properties. How could the electrical fluid be stored up in the fibres of the brain and nerves? How could it settle itself for the space of a century within a skull, while the slightest causes are sufficient to agitate and divert it from its course, and give it the quickest and most unaccountable motions

from Bernier, that completely justifies these observations. "My dear," (says he, writing to his friend Chapelle) "have we not agreed, you
 "and I, a hundred and a hundred times,
 "that our understanding, though it should
 "exert itself to the utmost, could never conceive
 "how, from a parcel of unfeeling particles,
 "any thing could arise endued with feeling, and
 "that

motions.—What a working would there not be in every human head in stormy weather, particularly when the fulminating matter leaves its home in the clouds, and comes down to travel upon earth! No doubt, those loose insulated parcels would do all in their power, to get united to the fluid, of which they constitute a part.—On the other hand, this substance, homogeneous to the human souls, would exert itself to reunite with them, in preference to all inanimate matter. So there would be thousands of people thunderstruck, whilst iron, lead, and all the more electrifiable matters would receive but feeble influences from it.—Our lives, without a miracle, could not stand it two days. The smallest bit of metal would put an end to them. No more would be requisite than a little conductor; a penknife, for instance, clapped under a man's nose, would drain him of his soul, and make him drop dead upon the spot.—Add to that, the perpetual displacing of the soul, and the filling up of the vacancy with another. For, if it consists only of electrical fluid, as often as the body is duly electrified, it must retire and slip away, as water does out of a basin that gets in a new supply; or air out of a room, where a current, or ventilator is introduced. Now, this soul, thus displaced and replaced, without her perceiving any thing of it, and without the smallest alteration, the smallest interruption of the ineffable feelings of the ME; and the new soul, which in an instant becomes thoroughly acquainted with all the affairs of the old one, and thinks herself that very soul, and that with the most intimate, the most irresistible conviction: these indeed are wonders well becoming this philosophick age.

“ that with all their atoms, however small,
 “ however volatile they make them, whatever
 “ motion and figure they give them, in whate-
 “ ver order, mixture or disposition they exhibit
 “ them, nay, and however careful the hand
 “ that directs them, they never can make us
 “ conceive how there can arise from them a
 “ compound, I do not say rational as man, but
 “ even sensitive, such as we may suppose the
 “ meanest and most imperfect worm that is
 “ found in the earth.

(144) Q. Is it not as hard to conceive the action of a spirit upon matter, or that of matter upon a spirit, as to conceive matter endued with intellect?

A. A famous Epicurean has affirmed it, and his disciples are eternally repeating it*. That is maintaining that the words *difficulty* and *absurdity* are synonymous, and that one may as well admit an inconsistency, as confess a matter of fact, that is certain and incontestable, though it cannot be accounted for. I am sensible, from inward conviction, that my soul acts upon my body, and that my body acts upon my soul. How that is done I know not: I must then believe that my soul does not act, and that nothing acts upon her; or else, that a thing

* *Tangere enim et tangi, nisi corpus, nulla potest res.* Lucret.

thing, by its nature incapable of thinking, thinks nevertheless very really. A fine way indeed of getting over a difficulty ! We must say too that the sun gives no light, because it is impossible to conceive how, at every instant he emits an action, heat and colours still new, to the distance of fifty of an hundred millions of leagues. We must also believe we are blind, and that it is absurd to acknowledge the reality of sight ; for, who can ever explain how, within an eye of half an inch diameter, the light can collect the dimensions and prospect of the whole world ? Indeed an action of matter upon spirit, similar to that which one portion of matter may practise upon another, would be absurd ; but there are numberless ways of acting whereof we know but few, and even those but very imperfectly. In how many ways cannot one body act upon another ? Can we flatter ourselves of knowing all these ways ? F. Boscowick, and many Newtonians hold, that even in the action of one body upon another, *non detur contactus immediatus*, that is to say, that bodies, even when they hit, and mutually impel one another, do not come into immediate contact. If that be so, the difficulty of conceiving the action of one body upon another, will be full as great as that of explaining the action of a body upon a spirit.

SECTION II.

(145) 2. However strong the arguments that prove the Spirituality of the Soul, is there not a more simple way of coming to an infallible conviction of it?

A. It is only just making a reflexion on one's self. Let the Philosopher ask his soul whether she be matter or not; she will answer him with more precision than all the sages upon earth*. A being that knows itself, that looks back on its own thoughts, that reflects on its existence, and knows it by an inward, ineffable, indivisible feeling, is evidently spiritual. The general idea of substance we gather from our own thinking being, or our *ME*; as we conceive nothing so clearly existing by itself, and

* A man of genius introduces her speaking as follows:
 " Cease vilifying, degrading thyself by the notion of finding in
 " that dumb heap of parts, atoms, corpuscles, dirt and mire,
 " the whole of what thou art. In me thy grandeur, thy
 " intellect is centered. If I have been united to a mean lump
 " of matter, it was to give it life, not to receive it: thy
 " body is become my prison; but to me was given the power
 " of moving and directing it. Ask me not of thine eyes:
 " they never will see me; enquire not for me of thy right
 " hand: it is not qualified to lay hold on me: my nature is
 " like my voice: thou hearest it, and yet it has not struck
 " thine ear. I am like the God thou adorest; thou feelest
 " his power, yet seeest him not. I am *Thee*; but the instant
 " thou wilt be nothing but *Me*, that instant will all thy
 " greatness commence."

and so unconnected with any thing else, as the *ME*. But, clear as it is that the thinking being is a substance, so clear is it also that this substance is indivisible and simple, a perfect unit. It is the *ME* that has various sensations, or various ideas, and compares them with one another; the *ME* that delights in viewing the enamel of that lawn, in hearing the sound of that bagpipe. It is the *ME* that enjoys all that, and accounts with itself for its enjoyment. When one attends to it seriously, particularly in the dead silence of the night, when all external things are hushed, it is impossible not to feel what a difference there is between this *ME* and the corporeal part, how independent it is of every image, every illusion of the senses*.

“ When

* *Sine ulla phantasiarum, vel phantasmatum imaginatione ludificatoriâ, mihi esse me, idque posse et amare certissimum est.* Augustinus, lib. xi. De Civit Dei. A Poet of the 16th century has expressed this inward ineffable power of the *ME*, in the absolute silence of the senses and of all nature, with an energy and an elegance suitable to a truth so evidently and so deeply felt, and that forms so striking a contrast with the frigid coarseness of Epicurean Lucretius.

Daniel
Heinsius.
Lib. i. De
contemptu
Mortis.

*Nonne vides, quoties nox circumfunditur atra,
Immensi terga oceani, terramque, polumque,
Cum rerum obduxit species obnubilus aer,
Nec fragor impulsas, aut vox allabatur aures,
Ut nullo intuitu mens jam defixa, recedit
In sese, et vires intra se colligit omnes?
Ut magno hospitio potitur, seque excipit ipsa
Totam intus
Ut gaudet sibi juncta, sibi que intenditur ipsa,
Ipsa sibi tota incumbens, totamque pererrans
Immensa immensam spatio, longè que patentem !*

“ When I was taken up,” says a celebrated philosopher, “ with the study of myself, I could not account with myself for the simplicity of myself, supposing the soul to be material. I thought I saw distinctly that this *ME* is ever one, ever simple, ever indivisible; that it could not be a modification of the substance that has extension, nor the result of any motion whatsoever. I therefore admitted the existence of an immaterial soul, to answer the phenomena, I could not otherwise explain. Gassendi in like manner, thought that nothing evinced more clearly the spirituality of the human intellect, than this power it has of looking back on itself, and judging of its own operations. It is a spirit only that can do that. *For the eye sees not that it sees, nor does the ear hear that it hears; But the human soul judgeth its own judgments.*”

Bonnet
Contem-
plation of Nat.
Pref.
p. lxvii.

(146) 2. Can not this simplicity of the *ME*, which is evidently known by itself, and by the feeling of which it consists, be rendered palpable by any reasoning?

A. Here is one which, for perspicuity, seems preferable to the rest; it would be needless to multiply them in a subject that has been so often discussed. I suppose, for an instant, that my soul has two parts. I hear a man speaking to me,

me, and, at the same time, I see his figure and his features. Each part of my soul feels a sensation; but the one feels not that of the other, because the one is not the other. The part *A* cannot compare its sensation with that which it has not: the part *B* will be in the same case: it will not even know whether its companion has felt any thing. Now, I readily compare the different impressions transmitted to me at once by my senses; consequently the principle, that receives and compares these two ideas, must be perfectly simple and perfectly one*.

(147) 2. Does

* The author of the *Helvian Letters* presents this observation in different points of view, that strengthen the impression, and bring its truth within the reach of every understanding. "If the intellectual substance be matter, the part of my soul that sees the top of yonder oak, is not the part that sees the branches; nor is this the part that sees the trunk which supports them. As many leaves as I discern, so many thinking beings are there in me. Millions of them there are; since the part that thinks at the right, is not that which thinks at the left; since that which the sight and thought of the higher leaves affects, is not that which is affected by the sight and thought of the lower leaves; since the sight and thought of each point in one and the same leaf affects so many different points of my soul, each of which thinks. There is one absurdity."—"Each of those beings, each of those thinking parts, sees but an infinitely small part of the oak: each of them ignores the thought of those that are contiguous to it, before, beside and behind it; yet each believes it sees the oak from top to bottom, and thinks of its whole height, though it sees but a very small part of it: another absurdity."—"None of those thinking beings see at one and the same time the oak and that humble bush that grows hard by it. None of them can, at one and the same

(147) Q. Does not the *ME*, according to M. Buffon, exist also among the brute creation, though not so extensively?

A. The learned naturalist has fallen into that mistake, by his supposing the *ME* was composed only of sensation and reminiscence, (T. iv. p. 52.) But as the *ME* is intellective only and reflexive, the offspring of thought, and the enjoyment of it; it is evident it cannot exist in the brutes, according to the principles himself has laid down, concerning the nature of man, and other animals.

(148) Q. If our sense of the *ME* lies so deep with us, if it be so exclusively peculiar to the spiritual soul, how comes it to be lost in a swoon, or a fainting fit, and even in our sleep?

A. Without recurring to the opinion of those philosophers, who hold that the soul always thinks, though

“ same time, think of both : and yet all of them at once
 “ compare the oak with the bush : all at once judge of the
 “ difference between the two : a third absurdity.”—“ Will
 “ the pretended Philosopher offer to say, the thought of the
 “ bush and that of the oak exist in the same manner in each
 “ part of the thinking material being ? Then the same thought
 “ will be in me as many times as there are parts in the think-
 “ ing material being. I shall have the self same thought ten
 “ times, an hundred times at once, and yet will think I have
 “ it but once : a fourth absurdity.”—“ Will he have my
 “ thought, or the parts of my thought, to vary with the dif-
 “ ferent parts of the material intellect ? Then my thought
 “ will not be at the centre what it is at the circumference ;
 “ at the right what it is at the left ; above, what it is below :
 “ a fifth absurdity.”

though she does not preserve the remembrance of her thoughts, we shall observe, 1. That the sense of the *ME* exists as often as the soul is attentive to it, and reflects on herself. That she should be always doing so, and always reminding herself of her existence, we have no sufficient reason to believe. 2. If, according to the rules inviolably established by the Creator, the corporeal organs concur in all the operations of the soul, it is a natural consequence, and a necessary one, that these being out of order or entirely silent, the soul should remain in a state of inaction. 3. If the soul could never cease reasoning and thinking, sleep would not repair the bodily strength, as the organs would never be at rest, but always employed in seconding the activity of the vital spirit that animates them. 4. In the present state of human things, it is well for the soul to be able to withdraw, as I may say, from herself, to shut the eyes of the mind as well as those of the body, to objects of sadness, of uneasiness, of excessive application; to cease acting and suffering. That is a salutary interruption, a kind of temporary riddance, by which pain is assuaged, labour mitigated, and existence in some measure renewed. 5. If the soul were present to herself during the silence of the organs, deprived of their indispensable

penfable affiftance in her operations, reduced to a forced inaction, this active being would fall a prey to irkfomenefs and melancholy, and the repofe of the body would be a torment to the foul. So vivid and fo active a fubftance, fays a Philofopher, were it to continue prefent to itfelf, when the instruments of its operations flip away from it, and thereby to lofe its connexions with all that exifts, would find herfelf in the midft of that multitude of furrounding beings, as in a frightful folitude; like that unfortunate queen, who, in the midft of a great and populous city, could fee nothing but a dreary defart :

..... *Semperque relinqui*

Sola fibi, femper longam incommittata videtur

Ire viam, et Tyrios defertâ quærere terrâ. Æneid, Lib.

SECTION III.

(149) 2. DO the operations of the foul witness her spirituality, as clearly as the feeling ſhe has of herfelf?

A. It is impoſſible to conceive how a ſubſtance that produces every inſtant ſuch a variety, ſuch a multiplicity of acts; that darts through the immenſity of ſpace; that weighs, as I may ſay, and meaſures the ſun and the other

ST. MARY'S
LOWE HOUSE
ST. HELEN

other celestial bodies; that takes the whole universe, vast as it is, for the field of its operations; that soars up to the invisible, the ineffable Author of so prodigious a work; that contemplates and adores him*; it is impossible, I say, to conceive how such a substance can be of an earthly, perishable nature. The Philosophers, both ancient and modern, have given to this reflexion all the strength and energy it is capable of receiving†.

(150) 2. It

* The knowledge of God, the sovereign Lord and Master of the universe, the beginning and end of all things; that natural and exclusive gift of the human understanding, to which the nicest instinct of the most sagacious and most teachable animals cannot attain, in any shape or degree whatsoever; that idea which is often so vivid, so full of feeling and affection in the most uncultivated men, the most simple and illiterate Christians; there is the dignity of man, his real title to glory, the stamp that witnesses his celestial origin. *Quid est homo quia innotuisti ei?* Pf. 143.

† *Sic sentio, cum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorumque prudentia; tot artes, tot sapientiæ, tot inventa, non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem.* Cic. De. Senect. Cap. 21. See Young's Nights, Night

Emile, t. 3. the ixth. Antiluc. B. 5. v. 116.—“ Let me see, says J. J. p. 65.

“ Rousseau, one other animal upon earth capable of making
“ use of fire, capable of admiring the sun. What! I can
“ observe, I can compass a knowledge of the other beings,
“ and of their relations to one another; I can conceive what
“ order, what virtue is; I can contemplate the universe; I
“ can raise myself up to the hand that holds the reins of it;
“ I can love and practise what is good; and shall I go and
“ compare myself with the beasts? Ah! groveling soul, it is
“ Philosophy, gloomy Philosophy, that has brought thee to a
“ resemblance with them; or rather, vainly dost thou labour
“ to debase thyself.”—“ At the single name of soul, (says an
“ author,

(150) 2. Is it very certain that those vast and sublime operations of the soul are spiritual and immaterial? Do we not read in a modern publication, that *understanding is only an abstract touching?*

A. This laughable definition is only a jumble of words that destroy one another. *Can touching be abstract?* Is it not the contact of an object actually present, sensible and material?

The soul, says M. Buffon, unites intimately with any object it pleases; the distance, the largeness, the figure, nothing can prevent this union when the soul wishes it. It is performed, and performed in an instant Can contemplation be called a mere contact? How could contact take place with a distant object, with an *abstract* subject, &c. &c. But, *abstract* be it: with all my heart, and an *abstract touching* too. What is it that touches? What is the principle that effects this touching? Here we are again upon the soul, upon that inward indivisible principle, that *ME*, which as we have just

Hist. Nat.
tom, 2. in
7. p. 435.

“ author, not indeed so much in vogue, but generally more
“ sensible) we feel within us that sublime affection which con-
“ nects us with the great eternal Being: we see the light of
“ the Deity dawning upon our thoughts and desires, we rise
“ to the fountain head of all creatures, and find we are not
“ born to bury our existence whole and entire in the bowels
“ of the earth. There is nothing, says S. Augustin, that
“ rouses a man so effectually from his lethargy, as the idea of
“ the soul. This recollection gives him concussions that echo
“ into eternity.

just now said, is both the expression and the proof of its own immateriality.

(151) Q. If in some men the soul appears with a lustre becoming her celestial origin, does she not seem in others to cling to the earth, and to lie almost on a level with the brute?

A. 1. It is easy to account for this difference. With a defective instrument, the greatest artist will produce nothing suitable to his abilities. The reason of the seeming stupidity of a spiritual being we find in organs badly suited to their operations. But when will the materialists account with us for the wonders of thinking matter?

2. It is not in her degraded state, but in that of her grandeur that the human soul is to be considered. When once she is capable of rising high, whatever the shackles may be that impede her flight, she is not to be classed among the brutes. With a body complete in its organisation, the ox is still an ox: his world is a green field, and to eat the grass that grows in it, is the highest flight of his soul. The monkey is ever a monkey, and his most sublime operations are but monkey tricks*

A thing cannot act without existing: but it may exist without its being always in action.

I am

* Hence the proverb, *Simia semper simia*.

I am capable of thought, once I produce it; though I do not always produce it, I do not cease to be capable of it. Does fire cease to be hot, because you prevent its activity? It is not by the deaf, the dumb, the blind, or the lame, that we judge of the powers of the human body; and those of the soul we would fain estimate by what the dullest, the stupidest of mankind, by what idiots are able to perform! To reason in this manner, is, according to Porphyrius, insulting human nature*.

(152) Q. Do we not see whole nations brutified to such a degree, as scarcely to have any thing rational among them? Who can bring himself to think that the Negroes, the Albinos,† the Hurons, the Hottentots have spiritual souls? And what shall we say of a certain people, who by Dampiere's account have not so much as an articulate language?

VOL. I.

N

A. There

* *Ex gentibus illis tam inhumanis, non oportet ab equis judicibus convicium fieri naturæ humane.* Porphyrius, lib. 1. De Abstin.

† The Albinos, according to M. Buffon, is a Negro, that has degenerated. But, properly speaking, the Albino, whose complexion is a deadly pale, and whose eyes can scarcely open to the day light, are found not only among the Negroes, but also in other nations. It is a variety that depends on climate influence and other circumstances. There are some to be seen in Switserland and the Alps, who want for neither vivacity nor understanding.

A. There is no nation, where reason has not manifested itself more or less: no nation where it would not expand itself if cultivated. The Negroes, who pass for the most stupid of mankind, are not near so much so, as is commonly thought. If they have but little wit, they have a great deal of feeling. They are naturally compassionate, as M. Buffon observes: they are tender to their children, to their friends, to their countrymen: what little they have, they share freely with those that are in want, though they know them no otherwise than by their indigence. They have therefore excellent hearts: they have the seed of every virtue. F. Labat, who studied them attentively, and compassed a thorough knowledge of them, gives them the same character*. He adds, that their fidelity, and attachment to their masters, when well used by them, is proof against any trial†. All that he relates of them in different parts of his travels, shews them to be far above the degree of stupidity in which we suppose them. The Negroes have nothing fierce or atrocious about them, they have scarce ever been seen to

* A voyage to the French American islands. At the Hague. 1724. t. 4. p. 152, 162. The manner in which this account is written, the good sense, the discernment, and the native veracity of the author, vouch for the observations it contains.

† *Ibid.* 148.

to lift a murderous hand against their masters: they are more courageous than might be expected from men depressed by slavery *. Neither the Albinos leprous skin, nor the coarseness of their intellectual organs, can be admitted as conclusive against the dignity of their souls: their stupidity is nearly in the same degree with that of the Negroes: their understandings are observed to open by instruction, and to clear up sufficiently to evidence the existence of the spiritual principle that animates them.—The Hurons, and other American nations, are stupid only to those who know them not; that is the judgment given of them by the Marquis of Denonville, who was a long time Governor of Canada. Instances have been seen among them of the greatest virtues of humanity and religion. On many occasions they have shewn more justice and generosity than their European masters: their languages have their beauties, their eloquence, &c†.—M. Buffon observes, that the distance between the Hottentot and the monkey is immense; since the former is inwardly furnished

T. xiv. p.
32.

N 2

nished

* *Considerations on the present state of the French colony of S. Domingo.* Paris, 1777.

† Lett. Edif. t. 1 p. 187; t. 23. p. 212, 295. *et passim.* Hist. of New France, t. 1. p. 252, 510.—Dissert of D. Pernety against the *Philos. Researches*, p. 77, &c.—Hist. of Kentucky, a new colony at the west of Virginia, (Paris, 1785. p. 187. &c. &c &c.)

Account of
the Cape of
Good Hope.

nished with thought, and outwardly gifted with speech. M. Kolb asserts that this people has a religion.—If Dampiere took monkeys for men: and if Helvetius adopted the error in his book on spirit, which he ought to have entitled on *matter*, these are mistakes for which we are not accountable; and if this notion has not been seen since Dampiere's time, it is because people have learned to distinguish the species, and see that monkeys are not men*. . . . But though these

* One Burnet, a Scotch lord, in an *essay on the origin and progress of language*, goes much farther than Helvetius, and maintains that all the inhabitants of the earth have been in the same case with Dampiere's monkeys. All nations, says he, first *clucked*, then *flammered*; and by slow, but happy improvements, at last *spoke*. It is easy to form an estimate of such Philosophy as that. It has had more Journalists than one, among its admirers; but we have not understanding enough to comprehend all the resources of such curious metaphysics. The language of this lord, is, in many respects, a kin to that of the *clucking* and *flammering* nations. In some other work, he may, perhaps, have the language of the nations that *speak*.—Those great descanters on the origin of languages, would do better to agree with J. J. Rousseau, (*Disc. on the inequality of Conditions*) that it is impossible to conceive, how men could of themselves, form for themselves a language; and therefore to acknowledge with Moses a primitive language given them by God himself, which the events, since that time, have modified and altered in a thousand different shapes. To say that men made a language for themselves, is as much as to say they spoke before they had a language; for, it was necessary to speak in order to agree that such a word should signify such a thing. “*To think and to speak*, says a man, who “has carried to the highest pitch the art of analysing languages, are two things inseparably linked together. *To speak* is, as I may say, to think outwardly: and to think, “is

Gen. Gram-
mar by M.
Beauzée
t. I. p. 253.

these monkeys were men, what Dampiere says of their language, after hearing them a minute or two, is not more admissible, than the account of some Russians, who, upon hearing French men speak, insisted their language was not articulate, though it was observed to them that any unknown language, spoken with volubility, appears to be such. In short, though there were a nation without an articulate language, it would still remain to be proved, that the principle of reason is essentially lost along with the signification of arbitrary words.

(153) Q. Have not all men been originally savages, and lived in woods, like the brutes?

A. So we are told by some of our modern Philosophers, contrary to all the lights of religion, reason and history. M. Buffon shows the falshood of this idea, by the very nature and constitution of man. "Man, says he, in every T. 7. p. 31.
 " state, in every situation, in every climate,
 " tends equally to social life. That is the
 " constant effect of a necessary cause, being
 " connected with the very essence of the spe-
 " cies, I mean its propagation" The hu- p. 28, 29.
 " man

" is to *speak* inwardly. When the creator formed rational
 " men, he gave them at once both instruments of reason,
 " thought and speech; and if, continues he, we separate what
 " the Creator has so closely united, we run a risk of going
 " astray."

Volt.
Thoughts,
p. 28. Edit
of 1765.

*Science of
Legislation,*
t. I. p. 51.

“ man species never existed without forming families; as the children would perish, if not assisted and taken care of for many years.”
—“ Among so many nations,” says Voltaire, “ so different from us, and from one another, “ never was there found any insulated, solitary “ men wandering at random like beasts. It “ must be that human nature can not bear “ such a state.”—“ Far be it from me,” says another Philosopher, “ to suppose a state of “ nature prior to society, and like that “ of the savages, as some misanthropick sophisters among us have asserted. It would “ be inexcusable in any one to know so little “ of the nature and distinctive character of “ the human species, as to think that man was “ destined to wander in the woods, or that “ the state of society was to him an unnatural “ state. Far from adopting so erroneous an “ opinion, I venture to say the Author of nature would have counteracted the object of “ his own operations, had not man, the most “ perfect, the noblest of all his works, been “ intended by him for a state of society. Why “ would he have endued him with an understanding which he can expand only by his “ communication with other men? Why, “ to the sentimental cry, which is all the language

“ guage that brutes have, would he have added
“ the exclusive gift of speech, and granted
“ that invaluable advantage, of annexing all
“ his possible ideas, to conventional signs necessary for transmitting them to others? Why,
“ refusing him that instinct, which directs
“ and secures the action of the brutes, would
“ he have given to man the power of determining himself by a free act of his will, which,
“ to guide him in the choice of means, supposes such information, as can be had only
“ by an intercourse with men? Why, by the
“ miseries and length of his infancy, would
“ he have rendered society necessary to him?
“ Why would he not have given to all men
“ the same quantum of strength, of cleverness,
“ of abilities, and qualified them for such
“ a variety of professions and occupations?
“ Why so many desires, so many wants and
“ feelings? Why make him a being susceptible
“ of such a multitude of passions, useless
“ to an animal intended for solitude? Why
“ sow within his heart the seeds of compassion,
“ of beneficence, of friendship, of all the passions that flow from the moral sense of a
“ pure ingenuous soul, and make it feel every
“ instant the want of pouring out upon others
“ a part of its own existence? Why, in
“ short:

“ short, why not limit his desires to the same
 “ narrow sphere, that confines those of all the
 “ beings, that inhabit the surface of the globe,
 “ that is, to the power of satisfying his phy-
 “ cal wants; a power, which, as it can be ex-
 “ ercised only by intervals, leaves within us a
 “ secret feeling, that reminds us of their inca-
 “ pacity to constitute our happiness, informs
 “ us, that the soul has her wants as well as the
 “ body, and that to supply these wants, man
 “ must encompass himself with all the social
 “ affections. These reflexions are, I think,
 “ sufficient to shew, that the social state is
 “ connected, in the order of time, with the
 “ very existence of man: that the savage wan-
 “ dering in the woods, is not the man of na-
 “ ture, but a degenerate man, whose way of
 “ living is contrary to the end she has ap-
 “ pointed for him: and that this state is rather
 “ an image of the degradation of human na-
 “ ture, than a picture of its infancy.”

(154) Q. It is then false that it was want that collected the first men together?

A. Yes: absolutely false. The first inhabi-
 tants of the earth were united under the eyes
 of the first man. It was one great family, that
 God himself had united. Do we not see
 amongst ourselves men sprung from the same
 blood,

Blood, linked together in a particular manner, without any motive of want occasioning their union?

(155) Q. Whence then the men civilized by Amphion, by Orpheus, &c. mentioned by Cicero, *lib. 1. De Invent. cap. 2*: the girl of Chalons, the wild man of Hanover, another that we have seen eating flints, long after he was taken by the Dutch in a desert island?

A. After the dispersion of nations, some might have betaken themselves to a wandering, wild way of living, like the Tartars: others, like the Brasilians, might have become cannibals: others, given themselves to a life of plunder like the Arabs, and afterwards got civilized, by means of some friend to humanity*, who, rousing them to notions of morality and religion, reclaimed them to a happier, and more proper way of living†. But these men were never without reason, without society, nor even

N 5

without

* This degradation of the primitive state has nothing in it to be wondered at. A way of living, free from constraint, from decorum, from restrictive, austere morality, will soon hit the taste of a depraved vicious man. But the impressions of wisdom and virtue, once obliterated, are hard to be restored.

*Nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
Curat reponi Horat.*

† This is the meaning of Horace's verses:

*Sylvestres homines, sacer interpretisque Deorum
Cadibus, et victu fado deterruit Orpheus.*

without laws. The wild men, that have been sometimes found in civilized countries, were children abandoned in their tender infancy, far from their habitations* ; their reason became like seed, that has fallen on an uncultivated soil. They have given proofs of understanding, as soon as their souls were able to expand themselves, which they could not have done, if they had not within them rational souls; for, where there is nothing, nothing can appear. "If," says a Philosopher, "one should happen to meet a stray bee, is he to conclude that such a bee is in a state of pure nature, and that those who are at work in the hive have degenerated?"

(156) Q. Is not the state of the American nations, called savages, the primitive state of human societies, and, as Philosophers call it, the state of nature?

A. Those who have presumed to say, that the state of those nations was the state of nature, have degraded the excellence of their being, and considered man only with respect to what is least considerable in him, I mean his physical constitution, without any regard to his moral being, and to that expansion of his mental faculties

* This is not a random assertion. It has been verified again in 1774, in the persons of three Englishmen in Virginia, and of one native of Savoy.

faculties for which man was made.—If this state be so natural to man, how comes it that most men have got civilized?—The state of nature can not be so wretched a state as that of the savages. What is a savage, such as those of America, whose happiness is by senseless writers so highly extolled? “He is a vigorous child, who
“ has neither resources, nor experience, nor
“ sense, nor industry, who is continually pinched
“ with hunger and misery, and sees himself
“ at every instant obliged to contend with the
“ wild beasts; who, on the other hand, knows
“ no law but his own whims; no rule, but the
“ passion of the moment; no right, but force;
“ no virtue, but rashness; a violent, headlong,
“ cruel, vindictive, unjust being, without re-
“ straint, without foresight even for the mor-
“ row; every moment exposed to become the
“ victim of his own folly, or of the ferocious-
“ ness of his fellows in stupidity. Savage life,
“ to which some peevish speculatists would
“ fain bring us back; and the golden age so
“ much celebrated by the poets, are in reality,
“ nothing but a state of weakness, of wretch-
“ edness, of war with common sense.” This
is copied from a Philosopher, who generally
says very wrong things, but sometimes very
true

true ones*. "There is nothing," says another, whose testimony is equally unexceptionable, "more common among us, than to say the savages are in the state of nature. This way of speaking is false, or at least, requires explanation. The state of animal nature is a state devoid of reflexion, subject to chance and whim, and that brings man within a smaller distance from the brute. The state of nature suitable to man, is a state of reason and reflexion, since reasoning and reflection is the very essence of his soul. It is then in this state alone he could begin to exist. Man did not fall into savage life, which is only a state of animal nature, till he ceased reasoning on the manners and customs he had inherited of his ancestors, or continued to follow them, without knowing their spirit." (Antiquity Unveiled b. 6. chap. 2.) Could the paradox that asserts the contrary prevail against the dignity and real destination of man, then we must only conclude with Mr. Buffon, "that it is more comfortable to vegetate, than to live; to desire nothing, than to gratify desire: to loll in apathic slumbers, than to open our eyes to see and to feel: let us agree to leave our souls in torpidness, "our

* Social System, t. i. ch. 16. p. 202.

“ our understandings in darkness : never to
 “ make use of either, to let ourselves down
 “ below the beasts, in short to be no more
 “ than lumps of brute matter pinned down
 “ to the earth.”

SECTION IV.

(157) Q. HOW do you answer the famous argument of Lucretius, that the soul seems to grow with the body, to decay with the body, to depend on the body in her operations; and that born with the body, she will of course die with the body*?”

A. It is speaking very improperly of the human mind, to say that it is formed, that it opens, that it gathers strength, that by exerting
 its

* *Præterea gigni pariter cum corpore, et una
 Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere mentem;
 Nam velut infirmo pueri teneroque vagantur
 Corpore, sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis.
 Inde, ubi robustis adolevit viribus ætas,
 Consilium quoque majus et auctior est animi vis;
 Post, ubi jam validis quassatum viribus ævi
 Corpus, et obtusus ceciderunt viribus artus,
 Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque mensque.
 Omnia deficiunt, atque uno tempore desunt;
 Ergo dissolvi quoque convenit omnem animam
 Naturam, seu fumus in altæ Ætheris auras.
 Quandoquidem gigni pariter, pariterque videmus
 Crescere, et, ut docui, simul ævo fessa fatiscit.*

Lucret. lib. 3.

its powers, it increases them, &c. When I consider a child attentively, I remark in him a curiosity that I do not find in a man. He observes much more, and seems to me to surpass in reflexion the man in years, the most addicted to meditation. He judges, and judges as well as he sees; he remembers; he compares the past with the present, and draws inferences for the time to come. What more can a compleat man do? He is a child, because his body is feeble, because he is ignorant, and has no experience, because he understands not the language that is spoken to him, because he does not annex clear ideas to the words he hears. Put a full grown man in the same circumstances; shew him, for instance, a machine, of which he has no idea, and destined for a purpose with which he is unacquainted; explain all that to him in the technical terms, or in a language to which he is a stranger: he will listen, he will stare like a child:—The human body is the instrument of the soul: without it she can not exert her powers; but she possesses them without it; thus a musician can not shew the superiority of his performance, if his instrument be defective; thus a pensman will write well or ill, according as the pen he makes use of

is good or bad. Give an eye of five and twenty, to an old man of ninety, he will see as well as the young man.—From the soul's beginning to exist with the body, it follows not that she must die with the body. Lucretius repeats this argument twice in the space of fourteen lines, and looks upon it as a demonstration, though its falsity is visible at the first sight. How many beings in nature, born together, live one longer than the other? To say the soul exists not after the body, is just as if I said: that child was not in being yesterday; therefore to-morrow it will be no more.

(158) Q. If the operations of the soul depend on matter; if wit, genius, imagination, memory, are the result of organs more or less perfect*, how can one from thence infer the excellence of the soul? Is it not rather to the body the honour is due?

A. All that depends on matter, just as musick depends on the instruments. It is not to the instruments, but to the musicians, that we ascribe

* Several Metaphysicians admit of differences between souls and souls, and do not think they all have the same excellence. Their opinion seems to be countenanced by a passage in the Book of Wisdom, ch. viii. v. 19, 20. F. Tourne mine has laboured to establish this opinion. For my part I espouse neither side, whatever favours of system is foreign to my purpose.

cribe the honour of a fine concert. If there was not in man a principle capable of perception, the organs would not act on any thing, and would be of no use *. Now, a principle, which, by means of organized, but still inert and passive matter, can rise to so high a pitch as the human soul, cannot belong to the earth, and must of necessity be spiritual.

(159) Q. Is this dependence of a spiritual being on material organs, a thing very intelligible?

A. Supposing the union of the body and soul, it is an evident consequence of it. This union, I own, is not without some obscurity †; but the
obscurity

* M. Le Cat, who of all others has made the deepest and most accurate study of animal organization, is also the most zealous opponent of those who would fain confound it with the soul. One may see his treatise on the senses, where he acknowledges that man is a machine that unites all that is finest and most interesting in mechanicks, in hydraulicks, in all the branches of physicks; but that far surpasses them by the union of this mechanism with a moving principle, endued with feeling, and capable of spontaneous action. He declares that his long meditations on the wonderful disposition of so many organs, have afforded him a convincing demonstration, that they are but the smallest part of man, and that if the body, which in itself is a master-piece of machinery, witnesses the existence of the Supreme Architect of all that exists, the substance, that animates this master-piece, proves still better that it can come from no other source than the infinitely perfect Being, the Creator and Mover of all things.

† This ineffable union seems to consist of two things, namely: the compresence of the spiritual soul and the organized

obscurity vanishes, when compared with the darkness into which they plunge, who refuse to acknowledge this union, as we have already shewn it. How many other indubitable, visible, experimental truths, of which it is impossible to give an exact and fully satisfactory explanation!

“ Vainly would the pretended Philosopher, (says a cautious and modest writer) “ require of
 “ me to unfold to him the mystery of this union.
 “ Man is allowed to feel it, to shew its exist-
 “ ence; but not to conceive all its relative cir-
 “ cumstances, nor to disclose all its secret links.
 “ The tie exists: I feel it: but folly shall never
 “ carry me so far as to deny its existence, be-
 “ cause I cannot explain it. The truth I can-
 “ not explain will not make me reject that
 “ which I feel, which I see, which I demon-
 “ strate. I will not substitute to mystery a heap
 “ of the most palpable contradictions.”

(160) 2.

nized body, and the mutual dependence of these two substances in their respective operations; a dependence decreed and established by the free and efficacious will of the sovereign Lord of nature; a dependence, by virtue of which the intellectual substance can have neither ideas, nor sensations, nor affections, nor judgments, nor reasonings, nor reminiscences, but through the medium, and by the concurrence of the natural and regular play of the material organs; and by virtue of which, the organized substance cannot subsist and preserve itself, cannot have the exercise and regular play of its organs, nor exercise the different functions for which it is destined, without the presence and the influence of the spiritual substance that animates and governs it.

(160) Q. Would it not seem that a spiritual being cannot be impeded in its operations by a derangement of the organs?

A. It would, unless you presuppose the soul united to the body. Connected with the organs, the soul seems, in some measure, to grow strong or weak along with the body. But far from perishing when that is destroyed, she only bursts her chain and loosens her ties. It is so that my eye, covered with a slight pearl, and impeded from seeing but through that cloud, finds its sight to grow strong or weak, according to the actual state of the pearl. If the covering grows too thick, my eye then sees nothing, yet has not lost the faculty of seeing. If, on the contrary, the pearl breaks, my eye, still the same, exerts its power and sees freely. . . . It is so too that a man, who travels in a carriage, has the power of walking; yet if the carriage happens to break, he will not advance one step, unless he quits it, and gets clear of the obstacle that opposes his progress.

(161) Q. Notwithstanding the importance of the organs in the operations of the soul, do we not find, even in the state of her union with the body, signs of her independence, and of her superiority over the corporeal part?

A. With

A. With a little reflexion one may find a great many. Thus it is that the senses act in vain, unless the soul is attentive to them. Vainly will the light strike my eye, the sound my ear, if my soul be strongly taken up with some other object; I see, I hear nothing. . . . Thus, that in sleep the soul is affected just as if she saw, felt, heard, &c. though the organs are at perfect rest. This is a * remark of S. Augustin's, which M. Buffon has vindicated against the criticks of the holy Doctor †. . . . Thus, that

* *In somnis enim tibi velut corporeus apparebis, nec id corpus tuum, sed anima tua; facebit corpus, ambulabit ipsa; filebit lingua, loquetur ipsa; clausi erunt oculi tui, videbit illa.*—Tertullian, lib. 1. *De animâ*, has the same remark.

† “ If we observe that our soul is often, during sleep, and the absence of objects, affected with sensations; that these sensations are sometimes very different from those it has experienced in the presence of the same objects, when we made use of our senses, will we not be led to think, that the presence of these objects is not necessary for the existence of those sensations, and consequently that we and our souls can exist alone and independent of these objects?” Nat. Hist. tom. 2. p. 433.—It will be to no purpose to say that brutes dream also. 1. Whatever the nature of brutes may be, which we shall prove to be very different from that of man; whatever powers they may possess in common with man, it still follows, from the observation we have just now made, that our soul does not essentially depend on the organs to see, to feel, to hear, &c. 2. The signs of dreaming we observe in the brutes, such as the baying of dogs, &c. is not sufficient to give us a knowledge of what passes in their brain. M. Fabre, in his *Essay on the Faculties of the Soul*, refuses absolutely to brutes the power of representing to themselves absent things. The body has frequently motions that correspond

that in the silence of the night, the perfect calm of the senses, the freedom from all external impression, the soul takes a new flight, doubles her activity, reinforces thought, possesses herself, knows herself better; enjoys, in a more close and perfect manner, the sense of her existence,

pond to certain sensations, without the soul's being struck with any image. It is unreasonable to judge of what we can only suspect from equivocal signs, by what we know from inward experience. 3. The dreams of brutes, if real, are formed only by images lately and strongly impressed; that, for instance, of a hare running full speed. Those of man, according to the remark we have just mentioned, are very different. All that might be inferred from the dreams of brutes is, that they are a remnant of the action of the organs on the principles of animality; but those of man are often so spiritual, so coherent, so wisely combined, that they suppose on the contrary a disengagement from the organs, and a flight, such as the soul could never take, as long as her faculties were enslaved by the senses. It is then that the slow-speaking man, thunders out unprepared harangues, and the grave demure man brightens up with wit and pleasantry. "It is in the night time," says a philosophick Poet, "that thought revives; it is in the midst of darkness that the soul receives her most vivid illuminations, and that her sight becomes keenest. Tired out in the day-time with the bustle of life; stunned with the noise; jostled, as I may say, and tossed about by the crowd, she floats in the ebriety of the senses, and strays far away from reason. The soul is then quite passive: the external objects crowd her with thoughts. But at night she recovers her liberty, and possesses herself whole and entire. No longer, slave like, does she receive, but at her own choice gives herself independent ideas, and arranges them, as she likes, in the plan she chooses. The extent of the world cannot confine her activity. She travels through the immensity of the heavens; and, returning back again, alights on the earth. So the weather-beaten mariner, fatigued after a long voyage, casts anchor in the deep and retires to rest."

ence, and her inexplicable powers. Thus, that oftentimes in bodies broken down by age or infirmity, the soul, though placed in the midst of the ruins, preserves all her vigour and grandeur. Thus, that when a man has had a finger or other member cut off, and feels pain in that finger or the space it occupied, nature declares it to be an accident that lessens in no shape the excellence of him whom it afflicts. Be the state of the body what it may, we still will be valued for our knowledge, our probity, our integrity, our disinterestedness, our patriotism. We are sensible these are qualities that belong to us, that render us estimable, as their contraries render us contemptible. We know these qualities as we know the sensible ones; we know they have nothing to do with the body, no more than with its parts, its dimensions, its figure, and the space it occupies *. Thus, *Quasi morientes, et ecce vivimus: quasi tristes, semper autem gaudentes.* that when I am occupied with the holy religion that Jesus Christ has brought down upon earth, my soul is in joy while my body is indisposed, and seems to be on the verge of dissolution; 2 Cor. 6. and, on the contrary, is afflicted, should certain impressions be made on the body, more pleasing to the senses than the law permits, and resists them.

* Plato, in his first Alcibiades, makes frequent use of this argument.

them. . . . Thus, that I conceive a man without hands, without feet, and might even conceive him without a head, did not experience inform me that it is the seat of thought ; though it is not possible to conceive a horse, without the constituent parts of that animal's body.

(162) Q. Would it not have been fitter to make the soul independent of the organs, or to give the organs the same strength and activity in all men, and at all ages ?

A. In the first case, man would not be a compound of soul and body, but a pure spirit. The question comes to this : would it not have been better that a thing should be without being what it is ?—They are not better reasoners, who would have the organs to be the same in all, and at all times. In this case man would never grow old ; would not be liable to the changes incident to matter ; would not be composed of a body suited to the present state of nature. It is ridiculous thus to insulate matters, and not consider them as placed where they are in the universe, in their dependence on general laws, and relative to the importance of their respective situations in the chain of beings.

Instead of reasoning without end on every thing that excites philosophical censure, it would be better to give a moment's attention to the
incon-

inconveniencies that would arise from an hypothesis of so strange a fabrication. If our organs were to act always with the same activity, what would become of us? If the impression caused by the remembrance of an injury, or of any great misfortune, was to be as vivid in ten years after, as at the time of the event, what a crowd of overwhelming ideas and feelings must not a man collect within him?—If children came to the world ready formed and instructed, who could govern them? who win their affections? who, and how employ them? Their education gives their parents an useful and necessary toil: it is the link of families, the support of society at large. It is by the necessity of education, that M. Buffon proves the impossibility of a nation absolutely savage.—“ Would not reason,” says an ingenious man, “ be to a child the most fatal gift? Of what use would it be at that early period, but to make him sensible of his weakness, and to render it insupportable? Instead of sweetly smiling on his mother’s breast, gloomy, sullen and jealous, he would be longing impatiently for his father’s vigour. Confined in his swathing cloths, he would have already all the desires, all the cares, all the passions of a man; and no means of gratifying them. He would

“ know

Tom. vii.
P. 28, 29,
31.

Helv. or
Prov. Philo-
sophical Let-
ters, t. 2.

“ know what liberty is ; and that cradle, in
 “ which he now sleeps so comfortably, he would
 “ consider only as a prison, out of which he
 “ would vainly seek to make his escape.
 “ Stronger and more vigorous in adolescence, if
 “ his reason got the start of experience, he
 “ would be only the more vicious. The se-
 “ niors of the people, having no more title to
 “ superiority, the class of mankind, the most to
 “ be respected, would be the weakest ; the or-
 “ der of nature would be subverted ; the heads
 “ of families, or of the state, would advance
 “ in age, only to become of less account. Far
 “ then from convincing us of the identity of
 “ the soul and body, this gradation of the fa-
 “ culties of the soul proves only the wisdom
 “ of its Author.” Old men generally lead a
 wretched and melancholy life : besides their ac-
 tual miseries, they are frightened at the sight of
 approaching death. A lively imagination, an
 unalterable presence of mind, would only in-
 crease their misery. Men of wit have some-
 times apologized for the cannibals, who eat
 their parents, to spare them the inconveniencies
 attending old age. But nature is wiser and
 more humane ; she weakens the feelings and
 the knowledge of those inconveniencies. Be-
 sides, this is the time when children, in full
 strength

strength of body and mind, are to replace their progenitors in the possession and management of their property; to rear and provide for their own posterity; to acquit themselves towards their parents of the duties of filial piety, of which their infirmities afford the most affecting and most meritorious occasions.—If all men were fit for the same things, arts and sciences must fall to the ground, as every body would apply himself to the best and most convenient; there would be an end to the inequality of men, so necessary for the preservation of the world*; genius would lose its variety, the earth its riches, and society the bonds that keep it together.

VOL. I.

O

(163) 2. How

* Rousseau, Diderot, Helvetius, &c. in imitation of Plato and Don Quixote, hold that men ought to be equal. This is visibly an error. Even the author of *The System of Nature* has allowed it, and, uninfluenced by these Philosophers, has proved that the inequality of conditions is the foundation and support of society, and arises necessarily from the constitution of our souls and bodies. Excellent observations on this inequality may be found in *the Spirit of Bourdaloue*, p. 91, &c. &c. In *Nature Displayed*, t. 6. p. 154. In *Lessius, De Providentiâ Numinis*, lib. 1. n. 120. *Sed. et in Paupertate*, &c. This is an admirable passage. Ethics alone, and the belief of a life to come, are sufficient to explain and justify the inequality of men. The practice of many virtues depends on this inequality. Without it, charity, compassion, beneficence, meekness, patience, mortification, steadiness, would be imaginary virtues, and but very seldom practised. The belief of immortality comforts and makes amends to those, who, in this inequality of lots, have not made the best hits: by this all is compensated, all is brought to one level. See above, n. 114.

(163) 2. How does the soul, after a man's death, perceive and act without the concurrence of matter; since all that is done, at present, by means of the organs?

A. Notwithstanding the certainty of the fact, a clear idea of the operations of a substance merely spiritual, is beyond our researches. Certain it is, that such a substance can act without organs; but an accurate knowledge of the state in which it is, of its manner of being and acting, is acquired only by feeling; and in a soul united to the body, this feeling almost always depends on some influence of matter. "In these different situations," says the Abbé Richard, "we always find the same principle of action, namely, a spiritual substance, active by nature, and qualified to act independent of sensation; though, in the present state of things, it is impossible to explain how the soul can act. The fetters that confine her do not permit her soaring so high: she can have upon this matter but imperfect glimmerings, which the obscurity of the subject, and her own heaviness, immediately extinguish*."—"Our soul," says Bayle, "might

Theory of
Dreams,
p. 189.

DiEtion. Crit.
Art. Epi-
cure.

* M. Sultzer, after the example of M. Bonnet, thinks the soul will be united to a very refined molecule, or atom, that will serve for her operations; as if it were harder to conceive how the soul acts upon matter at large, than upon this new species of body.

“ might feel heat and cold, without referring
 “ it to the hand or the foot, just as it feels joy
 “ for good, and sorrow for bad news, without
 “ referring those feelings to any part of the
 “ body; and if, during her union with a body,
 “ she refers pain or certain pleasures to any
 “ part of that body, the sense of burning for
 “ instance, or that of tickling, &c. it is owing
 “ to the perfectly free will of the Author of
 “ her union, that she may the better attend
 “ to the preservation of the machine to which
 “ she is united. Should this reason cease, it
 “ would be no longer necessary for her to refer
 “ those feelings to any object external to her-
 “ self; and yet she would be still susceptible
 “ of the modifications we call pain, pleasure,
 “ heat, cold. God might impress her with
 “ these modifications, either without confining
 “ himself to an occasional cause, or by confin-
 “ ing himself to an occasional cause, that would
 “ not be corporeal, but the thoughts of some
 “ pure spirit from whence it follows
 “ that pleasure, of what kind soever, may
 “ make the happiness of the soul; and pain,
 “ its misery, in whatever state it be supposed,
 “ whether united or not united with matter.”

—Though we are sensible of the actual operations of our soul, we have no idea of them

perfectly clear: we do not see what might be the nature of a sixth sense in an animated body, though it be most certainly possible. There have been extraordinary instances of hearing, seeing, feeling, &c. which Natural Philosophy has not explained, and of which no one as yet has been able to form a distinct notion *. However perfect the organs of a mortal body, they still form some resistance to the sublime operations of this quick and active being. It is only when freed from them that she will be able to soar, or when her instrument is reformed, in a life of glory and immortality. That is what the sages of ancient as well as modern times understood; and what is easy to conceive, since it is an evident consequence of the idea we have of spirit and matter †. Besides the
 O 2 activity

* If, before glass was known, any one had said the time would come when people would see through a lump of stone; if, before spectacles were known, any one had said the day would come, when people would see much better, by putting a solid massive body between their eye and the object; who would not have laughed at such predictions? And what is glass, what are spectacles, to the totally new revolution that will form the state of future things that awaits us after the dissolution of this terrestrial body!

† *Ignæus est ollis vigor et cælestis origo*

Seminibus, quantum non nexia corpora tardant,

Terrenique bebetant artus, moribundaque membra.

Æneid, 6. 730.

..... Namque omnem, quæ nunc obducta tuenti

Mortales bebetat visus tibi, et humida circum

Caligat, nubem eripiam.

Ibid. 2. 604.

activity and excellence inseparable from a spirit, that is freed from the shackles of the body, the souls of the righteous, lodged in the bosom of God, will there acquire additional powers, and drink new draughts of knowledge and life, at the fountain-head of all life and all knowledge*.

SECTION V.

(164) 2. SINCE all conspires to persuade us that our soul is spiritual, how was it possible for some of the ancients to think it material? Will any body say the idea of spirit is a novel idea, and was unknown to the first ages of Philosophy?

A. If ever men of sense have spoken of the soul, as if they supposed her material, it is because they took the word matter for *substance*†. The idea of a pure spirit is as ancient as the world. Plato and Cicero expressed themselves like Descartes and Malebranche. It is not credible

* *Revelatâ facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformamur a claritate in claritatem, tanquàm a Domini Spiritu.* 2 Cor. 3. *Quoniam apud te est fons vitæ, et in lumine tuo videbimus lumen.* Psalm 35.

† See Vindication of some of the ancient Fathers, in the Diction. of Heresies, by Monf. Pluquet. Art. *Materialism*, §. I. n. 2.

dible that our Philosophers could think seriously to impose upon us in a matter so well known. *The author of *The System of Nature*, ever punctual to contradict himself, confesses that, at all times, recourse has been had to spirits, to explain the operations of matter. If, as these wondrous criticks will have it, those spirits were material, they must then have recurred to other spirits, to explain the action of the former. Material spirits, what an expression!

SECTION VI.

(165) Q. IF souls are spiritual, must we not admit of a continual creation, or say, with some ancients, that even spirits can propagate? The first of these opinions seems to clash with the simplicity of God's ways; and the second, to degrade spirit into matter.

A. I. To

* Remarks of M. La Grange on Lucretius, t. 1. p. 347.—Exam. of Materialism, t. 1. p. 170. t. 2. p. 222.—It is not possible to express, better than Cicero has done, the perfect spirituality of God and of the human soul: *Neque verò Deus ipse, qui intelligitur a nobis, alio modo intelligi potest, nisi mens soluta quadam ac libera, segregata ab omni concretiono mortali.* Tuscul. Lib. 1. n. 27.—*In animi autem cognitione dubitare non possumus, nisi planè in physis plumbei sumus, quin nihil sit animis admixtum, nihil concretum, nihil copulatum, nihil coagmentatum, nihil duplex; quod cum ita sit, certè nec secerni, nec dividi, nec distrabi potest, nec interire igitur.* Tuscul. n. 29.

A. 1. To satisfy myself that my soul is spiritual, I need not reason much upon its origin. It is enough for me to be convinced of it by my own inward feelings. Could I, with a good grace, deny the existence of a man that I actually see and hear, because, perhaps, I know not from whence he came, nor how; whether by sea or land, on foot or on horseback? 2. A continual creation must be rejected, with regard to such beings, as are secured in their existence and reproduction by the general laws that preserve and renew the world. But with regard to beings that do not propagate, and whose simplicity precludes all division, creation is necessary; and their existence claims the wisdom and power of the Creator. Some Philosophers, nonplussed to account for certain mysteries of physical nature, have recurred to the immediate intervention of the Deity. Newton confesses it must be often resorted to. D'Alembert tells us that frequently the best answer to be made is: *God would have it so.* And now people come to chicanery upon the creation of spiritual beings! Vainly do they say that God cannot be ever at work manufacturing souls for men, fleas and elephants. As to fleas and elephants, we are not sufficiently acquainted with their souls, to say whether creation be necessary.

necessary for them, or whether they be not the result of some general laws hitherto beyond the reach of philosophical enquiry.—But the human soul is the master-piece of God's works, the object and the link of the universality of beings of which she has the enjoyment. The act of omnipotence, that gives existence to her, is no more beneath the majesty of God, than the looks of complacency with which he honours her—the paternal bounty with which he favours her—and the never ending felicity to which he destines her.—If some of the fathers thought that souls propagated, it was because they supposed this fecundity not incompatible with the nature of a simple and spiritual being. S. Augustin tells us so in express terms*. They might have been mistaken; but their error supposes in them no evil intention, and their principles can have no dangerous consequence.

(166) 2. Might

* *Augustinus, Lib. i. De animâ.* Some modern Divines say this opinion was condemned in the fifth council of Lateran. But it seems they read neither S. Augustin nor the council. The Christians of Abyssinia, at the time they were strictly united to the church of Rome, always adhered to the opinion of the propagation of souls. The journalists of Trevoux have prudently called this opinion *superannuated*, without stigmatizing it with any odious epithet. F. Norris has eminently confuted on this head the adversaries of Saint Augustin. *Vindicia Augustini, Cap. 4. §. 3.*

(166) 2. Might we not say with Ramsay, Leibnitz and Wolf, that all the souls were created at once, and united to bodies infinitely small, contained in that of the first man?

A. This opinion, considered in the aggregate of ideas in which some Philosophers have dressed it, deserves not to be seriously discussed. Ramsay goes so far as to blend it with the absurdities of the Metempsychosis *. If we strip it of those useless and false imaginations, and consider these souls, numberless indeed, but clearly determined in the all-seeing eyes of God, as a depofite in the hands of an infinite Providence, that has the distributing of them, that directs and fixes their arrival in this visible world, by ways no less secure than secret; there will be nothing found in it contrary to reason or revelation. We will even see many difficulties vanish, which occur at a first view, when we consider that *the hairs of our heads are reckoned*

* If indeed he be really the author of the *Philosophical Principles of Religion*; which appears incredible, when we consider the extravagance of the assertions contained in that work, which can be the work only of a mad enthusiast. Besides, the epithet of *posthumous* renders the attribution of it very suspicious. It is well known that works of that kind are often calculated to traduce the memory of virtuous men, who are without voice to protest against the imposture. We have seen elsewhere, (n. 22.) that the illustrious Fenelon was calumniated in it, in the most odious manner.

reckoned, and that a sparrow falleth not to the ground without the will of our Father, who is in heaven; that, at the time of the general Resurrection, God will restore to each man in particular the remains of his earthly existence, after their lying buried under the ruins of sixty centuries. Perhaps it is with some analogy to this opinion, that we are to understand that species of propagation, or rather successive apparition and manifestation of souls mentioned by the ancients, as we have just now said. Some authors have thought that this origin of the human soul might facilitate the explanation of Original Sin. It is however the most common opinion, and the best authorised, that the creation of souls is successive, according to the order and series of generations.

(107) Q. Does not the spirituality of the human soul beget many questions difficult to resolve? For instance, at what time does the soul come to unite with the body? in what part of the body is it lodged? Have monsters a rational soul? Have double monsters more than one soul?

A. It often happens, that truth begets more questions than falsehood. These have nothing to do with the main object. Though we should not answer them at all, the doctrine of the spirituality

spirituality of the soul will not be the less rational, nor the less solidly proved. The time at which the soul unites with the body cannot be ascertained, as her presence is not necessary for the commencement, nor for the first progressive steps of vegetation or growth*. It is not improbable that this time is later than is generally thought. The most prudent course, St. Augustin says, is not to determine any thing about it, and to be satisfied to remain in the dark, relative to the precise time at which the terrestrial

* There have been some of these growths carried to the sixth or seventh month, without brain, or back brain, or glandula pinealis, or oval centre, or even a head; which, in most systems on the seat of the soul, shows that, at least, to be a mere vegetation, attended with a kind of animal motion, derived from the mother. Examples of it may be seen in a periodical work, in the medical line, *German Ephemer*, t. 2. p. 60. and in the treatise *De Natur. Generat.* by Bianchi, p. 245.—M. Roussel (*Physical and Moral System of Woman*, p. 262.) observes, that headless monsters live, or rather vegetate, by the influx of the mother's vital spirits.—M. Barthez, chancellor of the Medical University of Montpellier, (*New Elements of the Science of Man*, at Martel's, Montpellier, 1778) goes so far, as absolutely to distinguish the vital principle from the intellective soul. M. Haller, in his *Physiology*, has laboured hard in favour of this opinion, which M. Fabre has since strenuously maintained in his *Essay on the Faculties of the Soul*, 1789. But without adopting a distinction, which, in its universality, and strictly speaking, may appear unnecessary, (as far at least as concerns the present question) there is no danger in believing that the automatick motions of each part of the *fetus* may continue, without the presence of the soul, to extend and preserve the whole, in some degree, and for some times.

terrestrial matter, destined for the abode of an immortal spirit, begins to enjoy that sublime privilege *.—Whether the soul be lodged in the oval centre, or in the glandula pinealis, or in the brain, or back brain, or in the callous body; or, as M. Buffon seems to think, in the midriff; or, although unextended, seems, as the ancients thought, to commensurate herself to the extension of the body, are queries absolutely foreign to the matter before us. To pronounce upon them, would require a knowledge of the manner of being, peculiar to spirits, and that we should rectify some mistakes, which the sight of bodies, and the habits we are in of making use of them †, have occasioned in the representation of things ‡.—When the
monsters.

* *Queri igitur ac disputari potest, quod utrum ab homine inveniri possit ignoro, quando incipiat homo in utero vivere. Enchir. ch. 26.*

† A manner of being of which we cannot form a clear idea, without knowing the nature and properties of a spirit, but which our ignorance, in this respect, does not authorise us to consider as impossible.

‡ The various systems on the seat of the soul have met with insuperable difficulties. A modern naturalist proposes one, which seems calculated to support them all. It is possible, he says, that the seat of the soul is not the same in all persons: for instance, that in one it is the callous body; in another the glandula pinealis; that, in one and the same person, the seat of the soul varies accidentally; and that, the first seat being vitiated and deranged, the soul removes to another quarter, the fittest to favour the perceptions she is to receive, and the motions she is to impress.

monsters absolutely deviate from the human form, and the organs refuse to harbour and serve a rational being, then these formless growths of humanity are animated by the same laws that animate the brutes. It is a sensible observation of Locke's, that it is hard to determine what degree of monstrosity is requisite to exclude the human soul.—When nature has combined several monsters in one, it is impossible to judge of the state of animation, without first doing the part of a skilful naturalist, by examining the constitution, and all the parts of this irregular being. Such monsters live but a short time, and therefore cannot be brought under a regular course of observations. It is likely they are animated only by automatick motions, whereof we shall have occasion to speak in treating of the nature of brutes.

A DIGRES-

A DIGRESSION.

On the Souls of Brutes.

(168) Q. WHAT connexion is there between the doctrine of the spirituality of the soul of man, and the different questions concerning the souls of beasts?

A. There is none at all: nor could any but wrong-headed reasoners stand out against their own feelings, and lose their time, arguing on a subject they know nothing about. A man knows his own soul by a feeling the most vivid, the most clear, the most identified, as I may say, with himself, and by his reflexion on that feeling, on which he reasons. Has he any idea of the souls of beasts? any experience of what passes within them, when they act? Does he know that soul; of which he has neither idea nor inward feeling? Is it not madness to compare a thing we know with a thing we know not? and madness in the extreme, to insist on judging of what we know, by what we have no knowledge of at all?

(169) Q. Was

(169) Q. Was not Lucretius, Montaigne, Helvetius, &c. in the right to place the brutes in the same category with man, since they act as men do?

A. One must have shut his eyes to the visible state of nature, to say that brutes act as men do. If they act with reflexion, why are their operations the same they always were? Why do the swallows of China build their nests like those of France? Why is the first they build as skillfully constructed as the last? Have the bees of Spain one form for their combs, and those of Poland, another? Do the old work better than the young? Were the spider's webs of a coarser texture in the days of Romulus, than at this day? And are those indefatigable spinsters grown cleverer at their trade in the many centuries they have been carrying it on amongst us? M. Condillac, who contends that even in the actions common to the whole species, the beasts at first make only attempts, has not, I suppose, thought nature worthy his inspection; he must have never observed the work of the beavers, the bees, or the spiders, or else his systematick ideas must have fascinated his eyes. It is needless to dwell on the refuting of such trifles, particularly since M. Buffon has so clearly proved, in the whole course

course of his natural history, that the pretended understanding of brutes was a real physical necessity*.

(170) Q. Why should we refuse reason to the brutes, since they give us visible signs of it in their actions and their works?

A. Why should we allow them what they have no occasion for, since by a blind, uniform, unerring impulse, they do every thing requisite for their preservation. If we are to suppose reason in the brutes, says a celebrated author, we must suppose it also in the stars, in the plants, and generally in all that exists, because all is done regularly, and for the good of the universe, in general and in particular†. For, if

* See again on this subject Bonnet. *Contempl. of Nature*, t. 2. p. 137.—*Antilucr.* l. 6.—*Scheuchzer Phys. Sac.* t. 7. p. 1345.—*Reimar. Observ. Phys. and Moral*, on the instinct of animals.—*Schott. Phys. Cur.* t. 2. p. 769.—*Nat. Displayed*, t. 2. p. 500.—*Girardin, Incredulity Undeceived*, t. 2. p. 34, &c.—*Helvian Lett.* t. 2. & 3.

† *Qui rationabilitatem Brutorum adoptat, non se extricabit ex obvis difficultatibus, sed potius intricabit, coactus rationem tribuere Cælo, Stellis, Aëri, immo toti mundo.* *Phys. Sac.* t. 7. p. 1345.—*Antilucr.* l. 6. v. 409.—This observation is evident to a degree that commands assent; and accordingly, all the sticklers for reflexion in brutes, who wished to be thought consistent, have acknowledged the same principle of reflexion in the inanimate beings. *The Touch-stone*, says Robinet, has more knowledge of metallick substances, than we have of any object within our sphere, (*Nature*, t. 4. p. 185.) One Bauman (*Thoughts on the Interpretation of Nature*) is quite of the same opinion. In every corporeal being there exists, says he, desire, memory, understanding.

if I admire the ingenuity of the bees, who contrive with so much symmetry their little cells, I admire no less that of the plants, which produce their blossoms with so much order and so much neatness. The vines and kidney beans creep in every direction, put forth their tendrils, like so many hands, to lay hold on something; and when they have done it, mount and unite in the closest manner to the body that supports them *. If the brutes act from reason, they must have a soul far more sublime and more excellent than man; their operations are certainly more simple, and proceed with surer and more persevering steps. If the brutes were endued with reflexion, man would be no longer their master: the inhabited world would be confounded in all its parts, or rather would cease to exist. I shall add nothing to what has been said on this matter by the author of

Nature

understanding. From these perceptions of collected elements there arises one single perception, proportioned to the bulk and disposition, and that is what constitutes the soul of brutes As the perceptions, that constitute the ox, for instance, form a larger bulk, than those that constitute man; it is probable that this happy animal understands a little better than we do, the luminous metaphysics of Robinet and Bauman.

* The author of the Philosophy of Common Sense reduces thus to the school form the reasoning of a little dog: *When I leap, I am caressed: when I won't leap, I am beaten; leap we then.* Well, the kidney beans and vines present us with the result of a similar argument: *If we climb, we will ripen; if we climb not, we will rot on the ground; climb we then.*

Nature Displayed. All that can be inferred from the operations of the brutes is, that an Intelligent Being has created and preserved them.

(171) Q. What notion are we to entertain of instinct, or that physical necessity whereby the brutes are guided?

A. We shall not perhaps be wide of the truth, if we suppose them directed by affections and sensations similar, in some respects, to those of men who walk about in their sleep, who are delirious, or who act in moments of total absence and distraction. Mr. Girardin (*The Unbeliever undeceived*, tom. 2. p. 34.) handles these comparisons in the most masterly manner. Instinct may be defined: *a natural propensity to certain actions, attended with an active power.* By this definition we see, that although reason appears to be sufficient for man, he is not refused the advantages of instinct, and that he may find the notion of it within himself. For, who taught the illiterate boor, the giddy-pated man, the idiot, that the farther the weight is from the centre, the more power it has; that the arm raised up can support the whole weight of the body ready to fall; that our centre of gravity must be always directly over our feet? Yet the idiots practise all these rules as well as the most learned Philosophers.

Iosophers. A child shudders immediately at the sight of a snake; it bawls out; it runs away. On the contrary, at the sight of an apple, it smiles, it draws near, it stretches out its hand to take and to eat it. In that there is neither reflexion, nor deliberation, nor free will.

(172) 2. Besides the invariable operations of the brutes, are there not others that seem to arise from circumstances? Have not some been observed to mend their faults, and to improve in their behaviour?

A. Physical sensibility, warned by repeated impressions, may, no doubt, instruct an animal, may correct and improve it in a certain sense, and to a certain degree, without the intervention of any reasoning; for, if brutes, from a blind propensity, and without any reasoning, have made their very first works infinitely more admirable than any thing that skill can show, as appears from the uniformity and perfection of these works; they may, without reflexion, and merely from habit, have acquired some additional skill, by means of confused representations, and a physical imagination, that extends neither to what is past, or what is to come; but that, in presence of the same objects, feels the same sensations, excites the same motions, produces

Natura Sallertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nullus artifex consequi potest imitando.
Cic.

produces the same effects, or varies and compounds them in proportion as itself is compounded and varied.—Enquire of the men of all ages, and ask them whether our present foxes have much greater abilities than those of past times? Dogs were formerly trained to hunting; horses, to the exercises of the riding house, as they are still trained among us; but has their wit, have their talents much improved?—It is not amiss to know, that matters are greatly magnified in the accounts given us of the ingenuity of certain animals. Historians who deal in the marvellous, are not overscrupulous in transgressing the limits of truth*. They often suppose long combinations of ideas, in a thing where the animal acted with the simplest views, and from mere mechanical impulse. For instance, if it be true that beavers do not build in populous countries†, it is because they have been annoyed, dispersed, and discouraged by the repeated ruining of their buildings. It seems it is without reason that

M. Buffon

* Whenever I have undertaken to verify facts of this kind, I either found them entirely destitute of foundation, or clothed with so many false circumstances, that the truth was not to be known. A very singular instance of this we find in the *Journal Hist. and Litter.* of the 15th April, 1779, p. 568, and 15th June, p. 255, relating to two horses of Lunéville.

† M. Reimar has denied this fact; and M. Condillac has not been happy in his defence of M. Buffon.

M. Buffon admires this inaction. One of his copists runs upon this occasion into rants perfectly ridiculous. Do the beavers of Canada build this day with more elegance, than when the province was first discovered? If they make a progress in this art, we may see them one day lodged like our farmers general: the head of their commonwealth will have his Louvre; and, perhaps, when architecture is lost among men, it will flourish among the beavers. Such are the consequences of the absurd principles laid down by the violent, inconsistent author of the *Histoire Philosophique*.

(173) Q. Might it not be owing to the imperfection of their organs, that the brutes remain so far behind man? Is there not a celebrated Philosopher, who has taught, that, should the horse's hoof become a hand, we should see the horse rivalling man, in the use of reason and the sovereignty of the earth? Has not another said, that the whole difference between man and the brutes proceeded from a brain proportionably larger in the former, than in the latter?

Hist. Philo-
sophique et
Politique du
Commerce
des Euro-
peens dans
le nouveau
monde.

A. "This man," says M. Bonnet, "who thought Paling, t. 1.
" he had taken a very philosophick step, did P. 167.
" not consider that any animal whatsoever is
" a system in itself, whereof the parts are
" all

“all in proportion to one another. Should
 “the quadruped’s hoof become a hand with
 “flexible fingers, the hoof would still remain
 “in the brain” The monkeys, particularly the Pongo, have fingers pretty like ours. Do we see them on that account flying from pole to pole, to give mutual assistance to one another, traversing the whole terraqueous globe, to carry to new nations the treasures of religion, art and nature? Do we see them entering into literary, commercial, lucrative, instructive, sentimental correspondences; learning to know and adore the great invisible Author of nature? Cast an eye on those spacious palaces, those superb monuments of genius, and master-pieces of art; look for them among the five fingered brutes.—We have seen men born without hands or feet, yet as rational as others, and showing sometimes more wit and ingenuity.

The Philosopher, who has been so wrong in his reasoning on the brain, knows not, I suppose, that in the calf the brain is of an astonishing largeness; that in an infant, it is relatively much larger than in a man; that there are maladies, in which according to the remark of the celebrated Haller, the brain wastes away, without the patient’s experiencing any decay of his intellectual powers; that there
 are

are monkeys, and cetaceous animals, which, in proportion to the bulk of their bodies, have more brain than man; that the elephant, though with more instinct than any other animal, has a smaller brain than most of them, considering his bulk, &c. &c. (*See the Philosophical Reflexions on the System of Nature, by Mr. Holland, 1775, p. 60.*) *The monkey's brain, says M. Buffon, is absolutely of the same form and proportion with that of man, yet the monkey does not think. (Nat. Hist. t. xiv. p. 61.)*

(174) 2. Is it not perhaps, for want of society, of education, of a sufficient length of life, that the brutes can not compass a stock of ideas abundant enough to display their intellectual faculties?

A. In this case, the crow, who is a long liver, being caged in some apartment, where debating clubs frequently met, would become a Demosthenes, a Plato; the monkey in a Prince's cabinet, would become a profound politician, an able and cunning courtier*. It would be for the credit of Philosophy to suppress such vagaries as these.—Why don't the brutes live in society with men? Why don't they give polite and

* The brutes that have never lived with man, such as the Fox, the Beaver, have generally more instinct and cunning than domestic animals. The Elephant, who lives in deserts, and enters not into society with man, till after he has lost his liberty, (for he never breeds during his captivity) is accounted the most docile, and most prudent of all quadrupeds.

and learned education to their young? Shortly, to be sure, we shall see mathematical schools erected in Congo and Guinea; it will be worth while to go and admire their Claviuses and their Newtons. It is in vain to reason on the influence of education; why don't the brutes set up academies among themselves? Why, living in company with men of the greatest knowledge, do they still remain brutes, &c.*?

(175) Q. Since, according to M. Buffon, the Pongo's brain is organised exactly like that of man, why look for any difference between the two beings?

A. We

* Judge of their aptness to gather information and to improve their knowledge, by the continual ignorance in which they remain of the treatment we give them, and the fatal doom that awaits them. We are killing and eating them these five thousand years, without their suspecting any such thing. The hen, who has seen hundreds of her sisters butchered before her eyes, takes not the least umbrage at it, but rears her chickens with all the tenderness of a mother, without the smallest suspicion of what their lot is to be. The oxen, the sheep and the calves, &c. live in the same heedless, unsuspecting way. They see us every day clothed in the skins of their relations: whole streets present them with the melancholy spectacle of their murdered brethren. So long and so dreadful a massacre has not as yet been able to give them the smallest idea of their destiny, nor the slightest mistrust of man:.... I know not whether there be many reflexions fitter to confirm the notions that sound Philosophy gives us of the souls of brutes:.... Nor is it to any purpose to say that we feed them. What man in the world, for the consideration of a few years food, would consent to be murdered and devoured, himself and all his posterity, without ever in the space of five centuries protesting against so barbarous a contract?

A. We do not look for any: but the difference plainly shows itself, and gives rise to this argument in favour of the human soul, which M. Buffon considers as evident and unanswerable. “ The tongue of the Orenge-Outang, T. xiv. p. 61.
 “ says this learned Naturalist, and all the organs of speech are the same as in man, and
 “ yet the Orenge-Outang does not speak: the
 “ brain is absolutely of the same form and same
 “ proportion, and yet he does not think: can
 “ there be a clearer proof, that matter alone,
 “ however perfectly organised, can produce
 “ neither thought, nor speech, which is the
 “ sign of it, unless it be animated by a principle
 “ of a superiour kind? . . . This Orenge-Outang, T. xiv. p. 4.
 “ or Pongo, says he elsewhere, is in reality
 “ but a brute, but one of a very extraordinary
 “ kind, which man cannot see, without looking
 “ into himself, without examining himself,
 “ and remaining thoroughly convinced that
 “ his body is not the most essential part
 “ of his nature Accordingly he is no T. xi. p. 3.
 “ less indocile than whimsical. His nature is in
 “ all respects equally peevish and perverse: no
 “ relative sensibility, no gratitude for kind
 “ treatment, no remembrance of benefits received: the monkey imitates man, not in
 “ what he will, but in what he can: he is far- T. xiv. p. 38.
 “ ther

“ther from man than most other animals,
 “than the dog, for instance, the elephant,
 P. 41, 42. “&c.*”. Other observations may be seen in
 the same Naturalist, that evidently remove the
 monkey to the class of beings destitute of
 reason, and, by fact evidence, destroy the Epicu-
 rean Philosophy, which is busy in searching the
 organization of the brain, for the difference be-
 tween two beings so remote from one another.†

(176) 2. Notwithstanding the anatomical
 likeness between the monkey and man, might
 not one suspect some imperceptible failing,
 that

* A modern observer does not hesitate to rank the monkey
 below different birds. *As to the intellectual powers, says he, the Orenge-Outang is much farther from man than the Parrot, the Magpie, the Black-bird, which are taught to articulate some words, a thing that no monkey could ever do.* This assertion, which at first appears extraordinary, becomes plausible, when one considers that the monkey has the organ of the voice perfectly such as it is in man; that, besides, he has the same inward organization of the brain, and that he never could repeat one syllable, though he had lived many years in company with courtiers, and prating females, while a black-bird, who has none of these advantages, learns readily the language of man, and repeats it with a precision, that might well shame the stupid anthropomorphick brute.

† Helvetius charges this on the mechanical disposition of the body, *which keeps monkeys, as well as children in perpetual motion, and renders them incapable of irksomeness, which is one of the principles of the perfectibility of the human mind.* But why do not children remain in that state of perpetual motion, in that incapacity of feeling irksomeness? Why do they become settled and sedate men, reasoning on all subjects and all sciences, while the monkeys continue only to grin and play their tricks? This the sublime Philosopher has forgot to tell us.

that prevents in the former, as in idiots, the birth of thought?*

A. It is certain, that in idiots thought is prevented by a failing in the organs; but it is equally certain, that it manifests itself in all men, in whom this failing does not exist. I discover it in myself by the most inward consciousness, from whence I infer upon the strongest grounds, that the principle of thought exists also in the idiot. On the contrary, no monkey having ever thought, I must conclude that thought is no property of his; as the general qualities of the species, arise from the essence and nature which never changes.—After all that can be imagined on this head, it is still certain, and Mr. Buffon clearly proves it, that man thinks, and monkeys do not, and that we find no reason of this difference in the organs. While wavering minds amuse themselves with *who knows*, and *may be's*, and *why not's*, the man of sense forms his judgment, and rests it upon facts, and sees in this neither mystery nor matter for disputation. *Creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam: ad imaginem Dei creavit illum . . . Inspi-*

P 2

ravit

* Is it very certain that a skilful anatomist could find no derangement of the organs in an idiot? . . . Perhaps this assertion is as gratuitous as many others, on which people argue without end, and to little purpose. But there is no danger in supposing it true.

travit in faciem ejus, &c. There is the answer to all questions; there are the true reasons of the difference. The Creator, says M. Buffon, has penetrated the body of man with his divine breath. Had he done the same favour, I don't say to the monkey, but to the meanest species of all, to the animal the most indifferently organised, that species would have soon become the rival of man; quickened by the spirit, it would have topped above the rest, would have thought, would have spoke This extension in our nature comes not so much from the properties of the body, as from those of the soul; man, by a single ray of his understanding, has brought, as I may say, under his dominion, all the elements: has produced that of fire, which existed not on the surface of the earth: has contrived to clothe, to shelter, to lodge himself Without being as strong, or as big, or as robust as most other animals, he has found means to conquer, to tame, to subdue, to confine, to banish them, and to possess himself of regions, which nature seemed to have made their exclusive lot.

(177) Q. Is it not enough to conclude from this observation, that the soul of brutes is indeed very inferior to that of man, but that the difference

difference is only in the line of *quantity*, not in that of *quality*?

A. All these observations prove that in the brutes there is no reflexion, and that they are incapable of any; since, with organs similar to those of man, they reflect not. Now, to reflect, and not to reflect; to be capable of thinking, and absolutely incapable, are not differences in point of *quantity*, but properties grounded on the very nature of things.

(178) Q. Since the brutes are so far removed from man, and their nature so different from his, what is the most rational opinion that can be formed relative to the principle that constitutes their being?

A. Some Philosophers have thought them mere machines; others, that they had material souls; others, that their souls were spiritual, but of an inferior order. Many, in short, have believed that these souls were neither matter nor spirit, but a kind of middle substance, that was neither the one nor the other.

(179) Q. What are we to think of these different opinions?

A. When man attempts to investigate the inward nature of beings, and generally, when he quits the sphere of sensible things, and such as are within the competence of his reason, the

the most he can do, is to allow himself a few conjectures, and to give them as such. But here he must proceed with caution and diffidence; and, to use the words of a celebrated Poet, like a traveller crossing a thick forest, by the light of the new born moon, dimmed by intervening clouds:

*Quale per incertam Lunam, sub luce malignâ,
Est iter in Sylvis, ubi calum Jupiter umbrâ
Condidit, et rebus non absulit atra colorem.*

Virg. 6. *Æneid.*

(180) Q. But still, is there no rational judgment that can be formed of these different opinions?

A. The essential difference between the brute and man being admitted, it seems useless either to adopt, or confute the fanciful notions of people upon a matter of which they neither are, nor ever will be competent judges. God has created the brutes for the use of man: man makes use of them, and that is enough for him. Here is however what appears certain. The opinion which will have the beasts to be mere machines, is rather a Philosophical amusement, than the result of arguments, fit to operate conviction on a serious, attentive mind. To grow so warm in favour of the mechanism of brutes, as to say with the Author of the *American Letters*, that it is a truth that
God

God has revealed to the little and the weak ones, whilst he has concealed it from the great and learned of this world; that it is refusing to bend under the hand of the Almighty, not to adopt the Cartesian paradox, and professing oneself a downright System-Enthusiast. To say that *no being can suffer unless it has sinned*, in order to conclude that the beasts do not suffer, is abusing a passage of St. Augustin, wrongly understood*, contradicting the book of Job†, and not knowing what estimate to make of the sufferings of a being destitute of reason. It is a strange mistake to measure by ours, the pains incident to brutes. These, not only are no more than pains of sense, and of the present moment, which receive no addition from thought, or from any idea of what is past, or to come, but in themselves they never have the same physical intenseness. Mr. Buffon thinks their sensibility lessens in proportion as their organization recedes from that of man‡, which
in

* See on this subject, an excellent tract of F. Merlin: *The true key to S. Augustin's works*, 2. part. p. 123.

† The history of the holy man, and the whole scope of his book, shews the contrary: one would think he wrote only to prove it.

‡ It is well known how much it is weakened, when looked for beyond the class of quadrupeds. It seems to end, and lose all its energy in the oyster, the animal flower, the Sensitive, the Polypus, the *Dionea Muscipula*. It is no more found
beyond

in all it does more or less, and in most of them it differs essentially. But, whatever may be the sensibility of brutes, it may be compared with that of man dreaming or delirious.—Those who have said the souls of brutes were material, did not mean they were made of matter, but that they could not exist or act in any shape, except in conjunction with matter. This idea seems true, but does not inform us of the nature or essence of the thing it professes to explain. Should we confine ourselves to the idea we have of the excellence of spirits, it must appear somewhat ridiculous to say, that a spirit can be brought so low, as to have no other destination, than that of running down hares, catching mice, or whistling wild tunes; and it is still more so, to think that this spirit dies with the body: but if we consider the vast distance there may be between one spirit and another, and the species most essentially different that

beyond this mark in the graduated scale of beings. But there is here an error to be rectified. Because the class of beings, endued with feeling is imperceptibly lost in the class of those that have no feeling, some Demi-Philosophers have presumed to abrogate the three reigns of nature, and to allow but one reign, one life, one substance. Nothing can be fitter to overturn all notions, and to throw language into confusion. Does the imperceptibility of the shades cause one being to feel and another not to feel? From the white colour one comes insensibly to the black; all the colours therefore are white. The case is the same with regard to sound; there will be but one.

that may be comprised under the same genus, this opinion will be found less objectionable *. Those however who seem to have reflected deepest on this matter, have thought fit to admit a principle, which they suppose to be neither spirit nor matter, and, that is perhaps the most rational part.

(181) 2. Would not a being, that would be neither body nor spirit, imply a contradiction? That is, at least, what the author of the Philosophical Dictionary asserts as undeniable.

A. Why should there be a contradiction in being neither body nor spirit, any more than in being neither man nor brute, or in holding an intermediate rank between any two other extremes of a general class of beings? Why could not the things, that are not body, be divided into different classes? Where is the contradiction in having neither extension nor thought, neither parts nor intellect? Are we sufficiently acquainted with spirit and matter, to assert they are the only things possible in the universality of the creation? To the contrary, what we know of these two things, so distant from one another, induces us to think there is

P. 5

room:

* What a distance between God and man! What a difference of essence and substance! and yet both the one and the other are *spirit*.

Physical
sensibility.

room enough between them to place intermediate beings, that would touch neither one extreme nor the other*; and who will offer to refuse God the power of creating some species of substance, without either extension or intellect? A species of beings, with a small portion of feeling, necessary for their preservation, but without either free will, or understanding, or power of thinking, reflecting or comparing? He has created substances capable of understanding and feeling*, such as the souls of men: he has created others with understanding, but without feeling, such as the angels; and others without feeling or understanding; and these are the beings that consist of matter only. Might he not have also created some without understanding, but with some portion of feeling?

(182) Q. Has not this opinion, the most simple in appearance, its difficulties?

Supra.
n. 166.

A. As we confess we know not the constituent essence of these souls, and have secured her place

* The same man (Voltaire) who decides there is a contradiction in saying that the souls of brutes are neither spirit nor body, adopts the opinion of Boerhaave, who maintains that fire is neither spirit nor matter, but an intermediate substance between the two. See *History of the Progress of the Mind*, by M. S. p. 163.—There appeared at Manheim, in 1775, a Discourse on the *Vital Force*, by M. Musikus, in which this matter is very well discussed.

place to the soul of man, we think ourselves dispensed from answering these questions. . . . Those who are fond of blending systematick notions with truths independent of every system, may believe that the Creator, in shedding on the earth the universal seminal matter, for the preservation and reproduction of the different species *, has at the same time associated with it that neutral substance, whose nature slips away from our enquiries, and of whose existence we have but a glimmering view: a substance, qualified to animate organized bodies, and to exert its activity, the instant it is lodged with a set of organs on which it can play; but that, except there, remains inactive, and, as it were, dormant. This idea, which simplifies exceedingly the state of nature, and affords the fullest and most finished explanations, is within a small matter of agreeing with what Cardinal Ptolomei,

* F. Kircher, with the majority of chymists, calls this general principle of organized bodies (which is not to be confounded with the subject we are now treating of) *Spiritus Salino-Sulphureo-Mercurialis*. M. Buffon chooses rather to call it by the name of *Organick Molecules*. Doubtless, it is a mistake to say with this naturalist, that these *Molecules* are *active of themselves*. They are neither more active of themselves, nor more in motion, than fire in a flint, or in gunpowder. Maupertuis gives them a kind of memory, desires, aversions, &c.; which fancies of his are very fit to verify the saying of J. J. Rousseau, that *there is more nonsense in one set of Philosophers, than in the whole nation of the Hurons.*

Emile, tom
2. p. 155.

Ptolomei, F. Kumeth, Hirnheim, M. Le Cat, &c. have written on the same subject. M. Boffuet, (*Disc. on Univers. Hist.* 2 part, n. 1.) F. Kircher, (*Mund. Subt.* 2 part, p. 337.) argue from the same opinion *.

* This hypothesis, strangely disfigured by M. Carra, in his *New Principles of Natural Philosophy*, is there extended to the nature and origin of the human soul. An error, sufficiently refuted by the inward consciousness of the soul, as we have already said, by the deep-felt simplicity of the spirit, reflecting on itself, and producing that single, indivisible, ineffable ME, that final sentence against all the fancies of materialism; in short, by the language of Faith, which teaches us, that the enlivening breath of God confined itself exclusively to the human soul; that man alone has been made to the likeness of God, and consequently that M. Carra's fluid, unsolid and elastick in the extreme, has no more to do with the intellectual principle that animates us, than it has with God.

CHAPTER II.

The Immortality of the Soul.

SECTION I.

(183) Q. IS it not from zeal for the comfortable doctrine of immortality, that the sages of all times have inculcated that of the spirituality of the soul?

A. By no means. The enlightened Philosopher does not adopt an opinion, because it is comfortable or useful, but because it is true. If the soul could be material, so it ought to be said and taught. Truth alone deserves the attention of the wise. But matter can neither act nor think; the idea of matter, as we have said, is incompatible with the simplicity and the inward feelings of the *ME*. There is what has determined Philosophers. They considered the thing itself, not its consequences.

(184) Q. If the soul was of matter, would it not be an evident consequence that it must die with the body?

A. Before one drew that inference, it would be requisite to show that a portion of matter, capable

capable of understanding, is not capable of immortality; and that it is more impossible to conceive matter immortal, than to conceive it thinking. Thought is a thing as excellent as immortality; if matter can be raised to the one, why not to the other? Besides, the elements of matter are really indestructible, on account of their simplicity, and their incorruptibility; why should not our soul, whose simplicity is vastly more perfect, and better known*, have the same property, if we suppose her of the same nature†?—No, the spirituality of the soul is not the only proof of her immortality.

1. The Christian Religion is a fact, established by superiour proofs; this religion teaches me that I am immortal. It must be convicted of falsehood, before I can be cured of my credulity. 2. The existence of God is a truth, to which no man of sense can refuse his assent; and this truth is evidently connected with the immortality of our souls. 3. The universe is a fact:

* The elements of matter are free from mixture; but their indivisibility is, to me at least, very doubtful; whereas the unity of the ME, which produces the strongest conviction possible, excludes all idea, not only of composition and mixture, but of division and parts.

† This is what caused a man of genius to say: there is nothing but a secret and shameful interest, contrary to the natural love we have for existence, that can make us except our soul from the eternal lot of brute, inanimate matter.

a fact that supposes a cause; and from the fact we infer the existence and attributes of the cause. Now, among these attributes there are some that evidently suppose the preservation of the human soul, whatever its nature may be.

4. The distinction between vice and virtue is not arbitrary, but innate to man, impressed on his soul in characters indelible; and this distinction would be abolished, if the soul of man did not escape the ruin of the body.

(185) Q. How do you deduce the immortality of the soul from the existence of God? Supra. book i ch. 4. 5.

A. By the plainest reasoning. If there be a God, he is just; if just, he will reward virtue, and punish vice. It often happens, that the wicked man prospers till death; and that the good man expires in a dungeon. God does not punish the one and reward the other upon earth; he will do it then after death, in the time and place his sovereign justice will appoint*. "Though I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul besides the triumph Spir. Max. and Principles of J. J. Rousseau, ch. i. Art. Of the Spirituality of the Soul.

* This simple, but invincible argument, is expressed in a laconick and forcible manner, in this passage of the 57th psalm. *Si est fructus Justo, utique est Deus judicans eos in terrâ* It is true that from thence it follows directly, that the soul will survive the body; but never did any one, who believed the soul survived the body, doubt of her being immortal. We shall have an opportunity of throwing new light on this article, when we come to treat of the eternity of punishment.

“ triumph of the wicked and the oppression
 “ of the just man, that alone would prevent
 “ my doubting of it. So shocking a dissonance,
 “ in the midst of universal harmony, would
 “ make me look for a solution. I would say
 “ to myself: all then does not end with life;
 “ all, at death, will be set to rights.” This
 is the reflexion of one whom the unbelievers
 are not averse to hear. We will add to it an
 affecting and sublime passage from a celebrated
 English Philosopher.

Addison's
 Cato, act v.
 scene I.

It must be so—Plato, thou reasonest well!—
 Else, whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
 This longing after Immortality?
 Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror
 Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
 Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
 'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
 'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
 And intimates eternity to man.
 Eternity! Thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
 Through what variety of untried being,
 Through what new scenes and changes must we pass?
 The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
 But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
 Here will I hold. If there is a Power above us,
 (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
 Through all her works) He must delight in virtue;
 And that which He delights in must be happy.
 But when! or where!
 The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
 The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
 Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years.
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
 Unhurt, amidst the war of elements,
 The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.

SECTION

SECTION II.

(186) Q. **THOUGH** the soul were not immortal, would there not still be duties to fulfil; and consequently vices to shun, and virtues to practise?

A. The first of these duties would be to look for happiness in a transitory fleeting felicity: to enjoy and live at the expence of any thing that would oppose the pleasure of the moment. To neglect this duty, which reason and the irresistible love of self prescribe, would be both criminal and foolish; virtue would become the scourge of mankind, and none but madmen would embrace it *. We have already ^{Supra. book i. ch. 5.} given our thoughts on this head, in treating of the existence of God.

(187) Q. Is it not a law of nature, not to do to another what I would not have another do to me? Are there not many other laws equally binding, and absolutely independent of all systems?

A. These laws are no longer laws of nature, nor even laws at all, but mere extravagancies, once

* *Ergo malum est virtus et inimica natura; stultumque judicari necesse est, qui eam sequitur, quoniam seipsum lædit.* Lactant. Redit. lib. vii. cap. 9.

once you overturn fundamentally the state of nature, by giving to its Lord and Master a mortal soul; levelling him with the brute, allowing him no other felicity, and proposing no other object to his desires. In this case, it is evident, there would be no other law for him than for the brute beasts.—If men are confined to a few days felicity, I cannot complain of their seeking it at my expence; and there is evidently a false supposition in the axiom: *Do not to others, what you would not have them do to you.*—If man is reduced to the destiny of the brute; if his soul is only a piece of refined matter, all that is done for or against a being of this kind, is of no more consequence, than the treatment I give the oyster that I eat alive, or the gudgeon that I fry in a pan*.—Who will be the maker of those laws? who the guardian? who the avenger? God. We have shown how closely the idea of God is connected with that of the immortality of the soul. Re-
 morse

* Even here there is a difference to be observed. The Christian, in making use of the beasts, according to the views of Providence, preserves towards them a kind of sensibility commended in holy writ, and grounded on the idea of a Sovereign Master, who gives existence and life to all that breathes. The profane man sees nothing either in man or brute, but the caprices of matter; and, by a natural consequence, makes no more of them than the sport of his passions and ill nature. *Novit Justus jumentorum suorum animas: viscera autem impiorum crudella.* Prov. xii.

more of conscience? There would be no such thing. The wicked man would triumph in his success. The love of virtue? a strange love indeed! that of a noxious, pernicious chimera, equally inimical to happiness and reason!

(188) Q. Is not patriotism, military courage, heroism in the field, less connected in appearance with the tenet of immortality, and capable of standing even in the system of annihilation?

A. No; not more than any other shining or valuable quality of man. Here is what a clear head and a lively genius has said on the subject: "Stop, gallant* youth †. Whither
" now

* This, and the next quotation from Young, are not taken from Young's own work, but from a kind of faint imitation of it in French, where the nine original English Nights are spun out to twenty-four.

† I am far from coinciding with Mr. Clement, in his judgment on the works of Dr. Young, particularly his Nights, which is a real master-piece of the darksome kind. To me his criticism seems to be the production of a mind rather acute than candid. To single out some expressions, and make an aggregate of them, for the purpose of running down a work full of thought, and of undeniable beauties, is exercising a kind of censure that Cicero calls Grammatical Tyranny. A certain Philosopher, though a violent enemy to all religion, has done more justice to this beautiful poem. "Every one," says he, "has read this moral book: every one has admired in it that sublime language that elevates the soul, that feeds and engages it; because it is founded on great truths, presents none but great objects, and derives all its dignity from their real grandeur. For my part, I never read any thing

*Grammatica
non Aristar-
chus, sed
Phalarides.*

“ now so rashly running? To fight for my
 “ country, and die gloriously.—Ay, if you
 “ believe yourself immortal, you may encoun-
 “ ter death, since you know that death cannot
 “ destroy you. But, if with life you lose every
 “ thing, I pity your courage. Come back,
 “ and live a coward, unless you are resolved
 “ to die a madman. A bold unbeliever, who,
 “ prompted by pride, for instance, by the love
 “ of money, by the desire of revenge, runs to
 “ lose his existence, or from weakness to throw
 “ it away, is the maddest of all madmen. Un-
 “ fortunate victim of a shining phantom, let
 “ thy country sink, and seize on a plank to save
 “ thee from shipwreck.—My Country, my King
 “ commands me to die.—What is thy King
 “ and Country to thee?—Happiness is the
 “ necessary

“ so original, so new, nor even so interesting. I love that
 “ depth of thought, which, still the same, shades and diversifies
 “ itself a thousand ways. It is a flood that hurries me
 “ along. I admire these strong, these lively images, which,
 “ by their boldness, answer the subject he has in hands.
 “ Elsewhere proofs more methodical were to be had, of the
 “ immortality of the soul: but no where are the feelings so
 “ well touched as here. The poet strikes at the heart, subdues
 “ it, and puts it out of its power to resist.”—The author of
 the *Helvian Letters*, a work of eloquence and deep reasoning,
 has handled the same subject in a luminous and highly satis-
 factory manner. Establishing this great truth with all the
 weapons that sound and strong reason afforded him, he turns
 the laugh against his adversaries, and creates aversion and
 hatred to their desperate systems.

“ necessary reward of the sacrifice of existence.
 “ If virtue costs us our existence, it is the great-
 “ est of crimes ; it is a violation of our su-
 “ preme law. Notwithstanding the applause
 “ that nations give their victim, thou art but a
 “ horrid suicide The vice that makes
 “ me happy is my sovereign law ; and cowar-
 “ dice, that saves me, is my sovereign virtue.
 “ Oh ! virtue, said Brutus, just going to die by
 “ his own hands, Oh ! virtue, that I always
 “ adhered to throughout life, to which I sa-
 “ crificed both riches and pleasures, thou art
 “ but a powerless phantom ! Vice has ever the
 “ advantage of thee ! Is there henceforth a
 “ mortal upon earth, that will devote himself
 “ to thine unavailing power ?”

(189) 2. Is it not a sufficient reward to live
 in the remembrance of men, to enjoy an ever-
 lasting name, and to receive from posterity the
 homage due to virtue ?

A. 1. This homage would be folly in those
 who paid it. To honour what has no existence,
 to reserve one's esteem for naught, is not con-
 sistent with good sense.

2. What is it to me what will be said or
 thought of me when I am no more ? Is it not
 better for a man to have life and feeling in him,
 than to plunge into naught, for the sake of
 making

making people talk of him? It is here indeed that one may say with one of the finest genius's of ancient Rome:

Id cinerem, aut Manes credis curare sepultos?

Æneid 4.

There is only the preservation of the soul, and her perpetual existence in the light of glory, that can be considered as an immortality worth our desires and our ambition. There it is that man enjoys the honour of being immortal: there, that, present to himself, feeling and knowing himself, whilst naught nothing knows of the encomiums given it, he in full, undisturbed security, enjoys those bestowed upon him, because he holds his immortality from the Author of all life, who alone possesses the eminent prerogative of ever existing, and alone can impart it.

*Qui solus
babet immor-
talitatem.
1 Tim. vi.*

3. Supposing this remembrance of posterity a reward worthy of virtue, what means have I to make sure of it? Of hundreds who deserve it, not one enjoys it. "How many private actions are buried in a battle? Of all the thousands who, these 1500 years past, have died in France, fighting gallantly sword in hand, not an hundred," says Montagne, "have come to our knowledge. The memory, not only of the generals, but of the battles and vic-
tories,

“ stories, is buried in oblivion *. The fortunes
 “ of more than one half of the world, for
 “ want of records, never stir from their place,
 “ and vanish without any duration. Can we
 “ expect, that at every musket shot, at every
 “ risk we may run, there will be a clerk ready
 “ upon the spot, to enter them down? And
 “ though an hundred did record them, the
 “ records might not last three days, nor come
 “ to the eyes of any body.” An observation
 very fit to cure people of those vain desires of
 immortality, and of that folly so common, of
 looking for the reward of virtue in the smoke
 of glory.

4. The judgment of posterity varies with the
 predominant maxims, and takes for its rule the
 Philosophy of the time. The same man, the
 same action, will be successively praised and
 censured, according as new ideas, new princi-
 ples, new grounds of publick esteem, are form-
 ed. We have seen in our own days a Constan-
 tine,

* An ancient poet has expressed nearly the same thought.

*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
 Multi; sed omnes illacrymabiles
 Urgentur, ignotique longa
 Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.*

Horat.

Marcus Aurelius adds to the truth of this reflexion, by ob-
 serving, that even those that were formerly at the pinnacle of
 fame, and occupied the talents of poets and orators, are at
 this day quite forgotten, together with the authors of their
 encomiums. M. Aurel. Imp. l. 7. *eorum quæ ad seipsum.*

tine, a Theodosius, a Charlemagne, treated as ruffians and madmen, while the greatest praises have been lavished on a Sardanapalus, an apostate Julian, a Cromwell. After that, what dependence can be had on the glory that men promise to virtue?

5. He that aims at the acquisition of virtue, from a desire to be praised and admired for it, builds upon a foundation of pride and folly. Greedy of an intoxicating vapour, he performs good actions upon showy occasions, when fame is ready with her trumpet to proclaim them to the world, and the genius of journals and gazettes is practising his garrulity in the cajoling, honey language of *liberality*, and *humanity*, and *solemnity* of virtue. But the man of real worth, who acts only from the impulse of his heart, and upon sure, steady, unalterable principles, the fruit of his conviction and feelings, scorns the frivolous reward of a moment's puff. He even blushes to find himself joined in the same encomiums, and wrapped in the same sheets with the admirers of such factitious, ostentatious virtue. Real virtue would, if possible, conceal herself in darkness impenetrable to all mortal eyes. Content with those of the Great Being, for whose approbation alone she is solicitous, she considers the praise and censure of men,

men, their love and hatred, their judgments and their comments, as things far beneath her attention *.

SECTION III.

(190) Q. BESIDES those great arguments, taken from the very essence of God, and the inviolable rights of virtue, are there not other reasons that speak in favour of the sweet and sublime doctrine of immortality?

A. There are a great many, which we shall not undertake to adduce in proof of an assertion so well supported by the first and most obvious notions of the soul. Such, for instance, is the universal and unanimous consent of all ages and all nations The desire, so vivid and so strong, of living for ever, and the horror of nought impressed on every mind The respect that has been always paid to the memory of great men; for, supposing the reality of total death, such a respect would not be more rational, than that which I might have

VOL. I.

Q

for

* *Ipsa quidem Virtus pretium sibi, solaque latè
Fortunæ secura nitet; nec fascibus ullis
Brigitur, plausuque petit clarescere vulgi;
Nil opis externæ cupiens, nihil indiga laudis,
Divitiis animosa suis*

Claudianus.

for the memory of the shower that watered my land, or that of the wind, by which I got a good passage. There is no body but feels reluctant to the belief, that righteous souls, men of great worth and eminence, are annihilated; and that no more remains of them than their name and their dust *. S. Paul makes use of this reflexion in favour of the resurrection of the dead †, and the Heathens were sensible of the justness of it ‡. Such, in short, is the vast addition to the miseries of man, were he to die soul and body together. The brutes would hold the first rank in this world; and their state would excite

Supra. b. i.
ch. iv.

* "What!" says the author of *the Studies of Nature*, "and shall the reward of our virtues be, to mingle and be confounded with the elements! Shall thy soul, O sublime Feronel! be exhaled into inflammable matter! She who, upon earth, had the sense of an order that existed not even in heaven! What! and is all around us matter! are we deceived in that involuntary feeling, that prompts us, in the paroxysms of pain, to lift up our eyes to heaven for relief? The brute, about to end its career, yields to its natural instinct. The stag, at bay, takes refuge in the most retired parts of the forest, satisfied to resign, under their harbouring shades, the woodland spirit that animates him. The bee, near her end, forsakes the flowers, and comes to expire in the hall of her hive, and to bequeath her social instinct to her darling commonwealth: and shall man, led by his reason, find nothing in the universe worthy to receive his last departing breath!"

† *Si mortui non resurgunt, ergo, et qui dormierunt in Christo, perierunt*, 1 Cor. 15.

‡ *Ego quidem viros clarissimos vivere arbitror, et eâ quidem vitâ, quâ sola vita nominanda est.* - C. c. Cato Maj. cap. 4.

excite the envy of man, who subdues and makes them subservient to him. This is an observation that has been made by all men of sense, and the philosophick poet, we have just now quoted, enlarges on it thus: "If that, O
 " man, be thy lot, go then to the stables, and
 " there look for thy masters: lay down at their
 " feet thine imaginary sceptre, thy ridiculous
 " royalty. Thou art the slave, and they thy
 " kings: in all that concerns the senses, they
 " are thy betters. The grass grows at their
 " feet: they feed, without the necessity of cul-
 " tivating: their drink is prepared for them
 " by Nature's own hand: the rivulet never
 " ceases running, and offering them its wave
 " to quench their thirst: their clothes are born
 " and grow up with them: they tire not them-
 " selves in quest of foreign climates: they carry
 " not war into distant worlds to plunder their
 " treasures: their fortunes and properties are
 " in Nature's keeping: to preserve them, they
 " have no occasion to summon their neighbour
 " before the devouring tribunals of Law: a fer-
 " tile meadow is for them the garden of de-
 " light Man alone has the doleful privi-
 " lege of shedding tears; and the occasions of
 " exercising it are ever crowding upon him.
 " The happier beasts are not, like him, tor-

Young,
 Night the
 10th.

"mented through life: their sufferings are
 "confined to pain. The sensation over, they
 "cease complaining. For past evils they feel
 "no concern; nor does a fatal foresight make
 "them shudder at what is to come. Death
 "comes, but frightens them not: they feel it
 "only the instant it strikes: the same blow
 "begins their misery and ends it. So cruelly
 "distinguished from the beasts during life, are
 "we to be again confounded with them in death
 "under the same heap of dust?"

(191) Q. If men believe themselves immortal, why are they afraid of death? Ought they not to joy at the thought of leaving this world?

A. By this flimsy objection we may judge of the others, which Lucretius accumulates against the immortality of the soul, as this is one of those he is fondest of employing*. Though we believe ourselves immortal, are we therefore sure of being eternally happy? Do our virtues depose clearly in our favour? Is one always in a hurry to go and look for a fortune that lies at the other side of a stormy ocean, on which people have been often shipwrecked? Is not one naturally attached to the actual enjoyment

* *Quod si immortalis nostra foret mens,
 Non jam se moriens dissolvi conqueretur;
 Sed magis ire foras, vestemque relinquere ut anguis.*

Lucret. L. 3. a

of a thing, notwithstanding the claim he has to another much more valuable thing, but of which he has as yet no experience, nor his senses any trial? From a Frenchman's not being fond of quitting his own country to go and live in another, does it follow that there is no country besides France; and that, past the Rhine or the Pyrennees, one must perish unavoidably? What opinion can we have of a Philosopher who reasons in such a manner? If man had not a tie to this life, the human species could not subsist. What is a visible effect of Divine Providence, that, in the hands of the Epicureans, becomes a pretext to deny God's Providence, by denying the immortality of our souls, which follows evidently from it. "The Gods," says a learned Heathen, "have concealed from men the happiness annexed to dying, in order to make them fond of life. It is only at the last hour that this happiness is discovered *."

SECTION:

* *Agnoscere solis*
Permissum est, quos jam tangit vicinia fati;
Victurosque Dii celant, ut vivere durent,
Felix esse mori.

Lucanus.

"Evidence in this matter," says a Philosopher we have already quoted, "would be attended with the same inconveniences, as that of the existence of God. If we were sure, from any evident testimony, (I mean a palpable evidence, accessible to the senses, or absolutely irresistible) that there
 " is.

SECTION IV.

(192) 2. Is it true that the doctrine of the soul's immortality was not known to the Jews?

A. A Phi-

" is for us a world to come, I am convinced, that all the business going forward in this world would be dropt. The prospect of divine felicity would throw us into a kind of lethargick rapture. I remember, when I arrived in France, on board a ship coming from India, so soon as the sailors had clearly made the coast of their native land, they became most of them incapable of doing any work on board. Some stood gazing at it, unable to turn away their eyes: others fell to dress themselves in their best clothes, as if they were just going to set their foot on land; others were speaking all alone to themselves; others were weeping. The nearer we drew, the more the disturbance of their heads increased. As they had been many years absent, they could not sate their eyes with the verdure of the hills, the foliage of the trees, the rocks on the shore covered with sea-weed and moss, as if all those objects were new to them. The steeples of the villages where they were born, which they knew at a distance in the country, and called by their names, filled them with joy. But when the ship had got into the harbour, and they saw on the quays their friends, their fathers, mothers, wives and children, stretching out their hands to them, weeping with joy and calling them by their names, then, indeed, it was impossible to keep a single man of them on board: they all leaped on shore; and, to do the business of the ship, it was necessary, according to the custom of that port, to employ the crew of another vessel. How then would it be with us, if we had got one sensible glimpse of that heavenly home, where dwells all that is near and dear to us, and alone ought to be so? All our toils and vain pursuits here would be at an end. The passage from one world to another would fix all our desires, and engross all our cares. But nature has spread a cloud over it, and has posted doubt and terroure, as centinels, on the passage."

That is,
so far

as concerns physical proofs, and such as affect the senses.

A. A Philosopher, who never ceases deafening us with this imagination of his, shows pretty plainly, he is not better acquainted with the sacred writings, than with those of Zoroaster and Confucius, whom he is perpetually quoting. As to Holy Writ, it is full of passages, the clearest and most express, attesting this comfortable truth. I should never have done, were I to enumerate them all. God said to Abraham, that he would be himself his reward*. Jacob said he was going to join his son Joseph; he thought him devoured by a wild beast; and therefore could not mean the grave†. The patriarchs considered themselves all as strangers and pilgrims upon earth; and S. Paul proves admirably well, they did not mean to speak of Mesopotamia, from whence they came‡. It was a custom among the Jews to consult the dead; and Moses, under severe penalties, forbids that sinful curiosity¶. David says that the death of the Saints is precious in the eyes of the Lord§. Saul besought the Witch of Endor to show him Samuel||. The book of Ecclesiasticus, which

* *Ego ero merces tua, magna nimis.* Gen. xv.

† *Descendam ad filium meum lugens.* Gen. xxxvii.

‡ Heb. xi. 9, 13, 14, 15, 16.

¶ Deut. xviii.

§ *Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors sanctorum ejus.* Ps. cxv.

|| 1 Reg. Cap. xxviii. Eccclus. xlv.

which breathes nothing but the doctrine of immortality, is a collection of sentences and maxims of the ancient Jews *. Job, who, according to M. Goguet, lived in the time of Jacob; according to S. Augustin, three generations later; according to M. Huet, a little before Moses, says he will rise and see his God †. Habacuc wished for death, that he might enjoy peace in the company of the Just, and taste eternal delight in the bosom of God ‡, &c. &c.

(193) 2. If

* *Jesu, filii Sirach, Prologus. Multorum nobis et magnorum, &c.*

† *Quis mihi tribuat ut scribantur sermones mei? Quis mihi det ut exarentur in libro stylo ferreo et plumbi lamina, vel celte sculpantur in filice? Scio enim quod Redemptor meus vivit, et in novissimo die de terrâ surrecturus sum, et rursus circumdabor pelle meâ, et in carne mea videbo Deum meum. Cap. xix. It is ridiculous to say, that Job speaks here of his recovery. 1. That was not a truth to be engraved on lead or marble. 2. It would have contradicted other passages in which Job despairs of recovering. Ch. vii. 7. Ch. xix. 6, 10. Ch. xxiv. 15. 3. Job could expect to see with the eyes of his body only the Son of God, clothed in our flesh: *Oculi mei conspexuri sunt.* 4. The Septuagint say expressly: The Eternal will destroy me, and raise this body, overwhelmed as it is with sufferings. 5. What excludes, in short, all equivocation, Job says that, should God deprive him even of life, still would he hope in him: *Etiam si occiderit me, in ipso sperabo. Cap. xiii. 15.**

‡ *Ingrediatur putredo in ossibus meis, et subter me scateat; ut requiescam in die tribulationis, ut ascendam ad populum accinctum nostrum In domino gaudebo, et exultabo in Deo Jesu meo. Hab. iii.*

(193) Q. If the Jews believed the soul immortal, why does the Scripture say that the dead will not praise the Lord *?

A. It is well known, that in the old law the souls of the just were not admitted to the enjoyment of God; that they waited for the Mediator, to find their felicity, in praising eternally their Creator. But, besides this common answer, the Holy Scripture furnishes another, and explains its meaning perfectly well. The dead did not glorify God *like the living*, by *instructing the rising generation* †; they could no more *convert the wicked*, by *teaching them the ways of God* ‡; they *paid him no homage in the midst of the temple*, and in the grand assembly of the faithful ¶; in short, they no more admired the works of the Lord, and the splendour of his power in the land of the living §.

(194) Q. Does not the book of Ecclesiastes tell us there is no distinction between the man
and

* *Non mortui laudabunt te Domine, neque omnes qui descendunt in Infernum.* Psalm cxiii.

† *Vivens, vivens, ipse confitebitur tibi, sicut et ego hodie: Pater filiis notam faciet veritatem tuam.* Isai. xxxviii.

‡ *Docbo iniquos vias tuas, et impii ad te convertentur.* Psalm l.

¶ *Vota mea Domino reddam in conspectu omnis populi ejus, in atriis domus Domini.* Psalm cxv.

§ *Non videbo Dominum Deum in terrâ viventium.* Isai. xxxviii.

and the brute, and that the one dies like the other?

A. Here is the meaning of that passage; which, it seems, was never read by those who have so often objected to it. "*Reasoning with myself on the nature and destination of men, I said that God meant to try their faith, and their hope, and, for that purpose, had given them some likeness to the brutes; that life and death was common to both.*" Such, nearly, are the very words of the book;* which towards the end expressly says, that, after death, the spirit of man returns to God, to receive the salary of the good or evil it has done†. It is needless to reason on the meaning of the word *spirit*. Of what nature must that spirit be, which goes to God, in order to be judged?

(195) Q. How comes it then that a doctrine so fit to support the laws, and strengthen the constitution of a state, was not made the groundwork of Moses's legislation?

A. 1. Though Moses has not expressly made use of eternal rewards and punishments to attach the

* *Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum, ut probaret eos Deus, et ostenderet similes esse Bestiis. Idcirco unus est interitus hominum et jumentorum, et æqua utriusque conditio. Eccles. iii.*

† *Revertatur pulvis ad terram unde erat: et spiritus redeat ad Deum qui fecit illum. Cuncta quæ sunt adducet Deus in Judicium, pro omni errato, sive bonum sive malum. Eccles. xii.*

the Jews to the laws of God, the knowledge they had of them themselves attached them sufficiently, exclusive of their Legislator's instructions. It is so that among us the authority of the prince is cemented by that of God, and by the belief of immortality, without our being reminded by the laws of those well known general motives.

2. A dull, indocile people, excessively attached to life, and to its perishable enjoyments, was but slightly moved by rewards and punishments their eyes did not perceive, and of which their understandings did not know the value and extent. When they began to be more attentive and docile, the doctrine of immortality was preached to them, more forcibly and more frequently: their Sapiential books are full of it.

3. The enjoyment of eternal rewards being to commence only at the Redeemer's death, was a distant blessing, that made but little impression on men, who relished none but present happiness. We shall hereafter shew, that original sin and its consequences were very well known to the Jews.

4. The law of Christ was to be in every respect more perfect than that of Moses: it was to disengage the heart of man from all affection
to.

to what is transitory, and to fix it upon what is eternal. Immortality is then the basis of the new law. The figure was not to have the splendour of the reality; nor the shadow, the excellence of the light. The preaching of the master was to exhibit a sublimity which the servant could not attain to. This reflexion of M. Bossuet is expressed in many passages of the Scripture*.

Disc. on
Universal
Hist.

* *Misit me predicare diem retributionis.* Luc. iv. *Isai. lxi.*
—*Non secundum legem mandati carnalis factus est, sed secundum*
virtutem vite insolubilis. Heb. xvii.—*Nunc autem melius sortitus*
est ministerium, quanta melioris Testamenti Mediator est, quod in
melioribus promissionibus sanctum est. Heb. viii.

CHAPTER III.

Man's Free-Will.

(196) Q. IS the spiritual and immortal soul of man endued with Free-Will?

A. To think otherwise, would be making man a mere wire engine, the sport of fatality.

(197) Q. God foresees with infallible certainty all the actions of men; a rational being takes necessarily the part he judges the best; custom becomes a second nature, an invincible propensity. Does not all that seem to destroy the doctrine of Free-Will?

A. We have answered the first of these objections in treating of God's knowledge of futurity. The second is found by experience to be false. B. i. ch. iii. §. 3.

If the love of happiness determined infallibly the soul's choice, the christian convinced of the truth of his faith, or even the man informed of the misfortunes attending vice, could not but be virtuous: yet the contrary is but too visible.

There

There is no body but joins in the poet's confession, humiliating as it is:

Ovid. Metamor.
Lib. 8.

*Aliudque Cupido,
Mens aliud suadet ; video meliora, proboque ;
Deteriora sequor.*

Were it true that a long habit of vice or virtue could form a kind of necessity, and of insensibility to contrary attractions, it would be the effect of an infinite number of free actions, and consequently would be real free-will in its source and in its causes. But the strength of habit never goes so far, as to deprive one of all freedom to turn himself to vice or virtue, at least by degrees and successive steps.

(198) Q. Which is the easiest way to prove the existence of free-will against the sophisms of the Fatalists?

A. It is to reason thus: *There is a God both just and wise ; there is an essential difference between vice and virtue ; consequently man is free.*

(199) Q. From these principles, which are unquestionable, how do you infer the existence of free-will?

A. It is beneath the wisdom of God to have himself served and adored by rational beings subject to necessity, whose worship would be the effect of chance only, or blind destiny. It is inconsistent with the justice of God to reward

ward or punish actions done from necessity, and regulated by laws eternal and inviolable.—The man, who acts from necessity, is neither more virtuous nor vicious, than the sun that ripens my vineyard, or the shower of hail that destroys it. These are truths, that no arguments can weaken, and that reason has rendered independent of the whimsies of system*.

* “ It is with the arguments against man’s free will,” says M. Holland, (Philosophical Reflexions, &c.) “ as with those that are brought against the possibility of motion, and the existence of bodies. They are sometimes very subtle, difficult to resolve, particularly to those who are not acquainted with the quirks of logick. But as they contradict the strong, deep, irresistible, universal feelings of mankind, they only dazzle the mind without convincing it. Independent of all meditation, man believes there is motion in the world, that bodies exist around him, and that it is he who determines himself to the actions he is seen to perform throughout life. The Philosophers who maintain this to be an erroneous instinct, cannot get rid of it themselves; notwithstanding all the sophisms that impose upon them, they do not think otherwise than the vulgar, because they cannot help feeling as the vulgar does.



